

# EXPERIMENT IN ANARCHY





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by

R. M. GRAVES

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R. M. G.



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## FOREWORD

AFTER SERVING FOR over six years with the Palestine Government, first as Labour Adviser and subsequently as Director of the Department of Labour, which was created in 1942, I retired for the second time in my life in January 1947, and was wondering what sort of cabbages I should be able to grow in my old age, when I was invited by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to take up the appointment of Chairman of the Jerusalem Municipal Commission.

On June 10th I left Liverpool for the Middle East, after stopping off at Manchester to see the dress rehearsal of "The Circle", in which my daughter Diana was taking the leading woman's part. A Jewish journalist cornered me in the theatre and tried to get me to talk about Jerusalem, but after a few commonplaces I got him to talk about the "Intimate Theatre", where the rehearsal was being held.

On my arrival in Jerusalem I found that the aspect of the city had altered considerably since my departure eight months before, and that security restrictions were, and with justification, much more severe. Jewish terrorist attacks against the police and the army and against public buildings had been very frequent until the arrival of the UNSCOP Committee (appointed by UNO to enquire into the state of Palestine and make recommendations for its future government), of which I shall have something to say later, and it was realised that the Irgun Tsvai Leumi and the Stern Gang were only waiting until Judge Sandstroem and his party left to resume their activities. Nevertheless the administration continued to function, and the municipality was carrying out its duties as normally as was possible in the circumstances. I cannot help feeling that I shall not be doing justice to the story to be told in this book unless I devote a few preliminary pages to a description of the municipality of Jerusalem and its personnel, and to the circumstances which had invested it with an abnormal administration and had set an unelected foreigner, representing none of the citizens, in the mayor's chair of office. It occurs to me, however, that some of the detail which interested me may seem tedious to many readers; these I invite to skip this foreword, and proceed to the book proper.

I had been somewhat puzzled by the offer of this responsible

municipal post, as my previous career, which had been partly under the Foreign Office and mainly in the service of the Egyptian Government, had provided me with no municipal experience.

However, I reflected that few mayors were expected to run the different municipal services themselves, and that what was needed in Jerusalem was a person with friends and acquaintances in both communities, who was known to be neither an anti-semite nor a Zionist. I also possessed the advantage of being a lover of Jerusalem in most of its aspects.

These qualities would to some extent make up for my ignorance of town-planning and municipal finance, in which I rightly expected to be able to count on the assistance of expert officials and the members of the Commission. One thing I did not realise when I accepted the appointment was the extent to which the Mayor and the Council, or, since the replacement of these authorities by a Commission, the Chairman and the Commission, were dependent on the good-will of the District Commissioner or Governor of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

It has not been adequately realised at home that Palestine, which contains a much greater proportion of civilised people to its population than any of the territories administered by the Colonial Office, was, until the end of the Mandate, a pure, unadulterated bureaucracy. The country was ruled by the High Commissioner, advised by the Executive Council—a small body of very high officials—and the Advisory Council—a rather larger body of officials who passed legislation drafted by the Departments with the help of the Law Officers and submitted for their approval.

The absence of a legislative council or a legislative assembly at which representatives of the people could have discussed laws proposed by Government, or proposed legislation themselves, has been one of the major causes of the ill-feeling between the

<sup>1</sup> The District Commissioner was the representative for each administrative District of the High Commissioner, and was responsible for the various activities of Government in his territory. His most important direct responsibilities were the collection of revenue and the maintenance of public security. Among his numerous and varied duties were the solemnisation of civil marriages and the conduct of coroners' inquests. In Jerusalem, as I mention later, he was responsible for maintaining order and for the *status quo* in the Holy Places. He was also the ultimate authority in matters of Local Government. Heads of different departments with branch offices in the Districts were supposed to keep the District Commissioner informed about their local activities.



Arab and Jewish communities. If they had been able to feel that they were associated with Government and one another in legislation and other matters of public policy, they would have got to know one another better, and would, I have no doubt, have developed a certain rivalry in public-spiritedness and civic enterprise. As this book is not a history of Palestine, I shall not attempt to describe in detail the endeavours of the Government to induce the two communities to participate in representative legislative bodies. I shall merely record the fact that such endeavours were made and rejected alternately by the Arabs and the Jews. As a result Palestine has been governed for the last thirty years less democratically than any of our important African territories. Moreover, the faults of a bureaucracy were exaggerated by the fact that in the Advisory Council at least the passage of legislation was accompanied by the absolute minimum of discussion and most bills were transformed into law practically without comment.

It would not be fair to say that the public were not allowed to have any voice in the legislation. Comments and suggestions in writing were admitted as soon as bills were published, and many heads of departments also consulted the communities during the preparation of legislation. This was not a difficult matter in the case of the Jewish Community, which possessed a number of representative bodies able and ready to offer advice to Government on most subjects connected with the administration of the country. The Arabs, who had never set up an Arab Agency and, with the exception of the Chambers of Commerce and, more recently, the trade unions, had done very little to organise their community on a representative basis, made a far smaller contribution in the shape of advice and comment to the legislation of Palestine.

In consequence of the dissociation of the citizens from the Government it is easy to conceive that the laws, in Palestine called Ordinances, connected with Local Government imposed very strong checks on Municipal and Local Councils in regard to spending, borrowing, appointments and general policy. Strict control by Government of adolescent institutions is, of course, necessary and cannot be cavilled at, but a day arrives when the Corporation or Local Council may be held to have reached its majority, and then the restrictions on its freedom of action become increasingly irksome. Such was the experience of my predecessors, whether Mayor and Council or Municipal Com-

mission, and during my short tenure of office my colleagues and I chafed at our leading-strings, until, just a month before the evacuation, when municipal government, together with the rest of the administration, had almost collapsed, a new Municipal Corporation Ordinance was passed, greatly increasing our powers.

One of the chief drawbacks of our situation was the absence in the Government Secretariat of a Local Government Commissioner. This gap was filled in October 1947, but it should have been filled ten years before. Municipal Corporations and Local Commissions were dependent on District Commissioners for permission to perform all but their routine functions. District Commissioners, being busy men, often entrusted the supervision of municipal matters to their subordinates, and one could not help feeling that municipal matters were not very high up on the list of the District Commissioner's priorities. The Mayor and Corporation of Tel Aviv used to break loose from the official shackles from time to time and spend more and borrow more than they were authorised to do, and as a result they did wonders for the development of their city.

In case my readers are wondering why the Municipality of Jerusalem was in the charge of a British Commission, I should explain that after the death in 1944 of the last Arab Mayor, Mustafa Bey el Khalidi, there was a longish interregnum, during which the senior deputy Mayor, Mr. Daniel Auster, presided—very efficiently, let me say—over the Council. During this period the Jewish Community, who were estimated to comprise about 65 per cent of the population of Jerusalem, pressed for the appointment of a Jewish Mayor to succeed Mustafa Bey. The Arabs resisted this claim stubbornly and pointed out that there had always been a Moslem Mayor of Jerusalem. They absolutely declined to consider the appointment of anyone but a Moslem Arab. The Jews were prepared to compromise, in deference to proposals by Government, to the extent of agreeing to a rotation according to which a Moslem, a Christian and a Jewish Mayor should succeed one another. In view of the relative populations, this was a generous concession, but the Arabs declared that they would not sit in Council with the Jews on any but their own terms. After long and unsuccessful negotiations, the Councillors were thanked for their services and informed that they would be replaced by an appointed Commission, but Government made it clear to them that should the

Communities reach a settlement on the subject of the Mayoralty, it would be endorsed and democratic municipal representation resumed.

Accordingly, at the end of 1945 a Commission consisting of Mr. George Webster, formerly Postmaster-General, as Chairman, four Englishmen and two Palestinian District Officers was appointed. Mr. Webster retired at the end of 1946, and was succeeded by Mr. John Hilton, whom I replaced in June 1947.

The attitude of the two communities towards the Commission since its creation had been cool but not actively hostile. It must have been evident from the outset that the members of the Commission took their duties towards the city at least as seriously as the elected members of the Municipal Council, and it was probably realised that the former were less likely to indulge in nepotism or be tempted to relax regulations for inadequate reasons.

Moreover, the strenuous and successful efforts made by Mr. Webster to find accommodation for displaced shopkeepers, when portions of the Jaffa Road and Princess Mary Avenue had been converted into a "fortress area" with the object of concentrating and protecting police headquarters and offices, had been greatly appreciated by the Jewish community, who had suffered most from the evictions.

In other respects the town services had also been carried out punctually and efficiently, and the Commission were not blamed for the inconveniences which security regulations had imposed on Jerusalemites, largely in the form of forests of barbed wire which tore our clothes and offended our eyes as we went about the city.

In the early days of my tenure of office I had the idea of strengthening the Commission by inviting a few representative Jews and Arabs to join us. Government favoured such a move, but after I had sounded a few suitable persons it was made clear to me that no one of standing in either community would take the risk of openly collaborating with us. This did not mean that individuals were not ready to give advice. Indeed, I had several useful conversations on municipal policy with various notables, including Mr. Auster, the former Jewish deputy mayor, and Anton Eff Atalla, his Arab opposite number. Both of these men were genuinely interested in the welfare and progress of the city, and I have no doubt that if ever this distressing race conflict is appeased Mr. Auster will make an outstandingly

good mayor. When I left Jerusalem, a fortnight before the expiry of the mandate, he had taken over the administration of the Jewish part of the town.

Shortly after my arrival I received a letter from David Remez, the Chairman of the Vaad Leumi, the National Council of the Yishuv (or Jews settled in Palestine), in which he said that while he and his community could not recognise my moral right to preside over the destinies of the Holy City, and considered my position and that of the Commission as wholly undemocratic, he congratulated me on my *de facto* occupancy of such an honourable position. Mr. Remez had formerly been Secretary General of the Histadruth, or General Federation of Jewish Labour, and is one of the most influential and ablest men in Jewish Palestine. He and I had had many a discussion about trade unions and labour exchanges when we were both in our previous jobs, and I acquired the greatest respect for his strength and single-mindedness.

Apart from the fact that it was mainly composed of foreigners and did not represent the citizens of Jerusalem, I found that the Commission was unpopular for another reason. The rates had recently been stepped up from 13 to 28 per cent on the rentable value of houses. This would be reckoned a very low rate in the British Isles, and indeed I doubt if a lower rate than six shillings and sixpence in the pound exists in the United Kingdom. However, all values are relative, and old men and students of social history will remember what protests and lamentations were uttered when the income tax was raised to one shilling. In Western countries taxation is looked on as a necessary evil; indeed, the good use to which most of the money raised in taxes is put has converted many people to the belief that it is not an evil at all, provided decent limits are observed. In the East taxes are still resented and evaded where possible. The people of Jerusalem had some reason to be discontented, for they had to pay, in addition to the municipal rates, the urban property tax of 10 per cent on rental values, a small but appreciable business tax and income tax, which was insignificant a few years ago, but has been growing with unwelcome precocity ever since. Besides these official rates and taxes, the Jewish Community Authorities levied on their members contributions for education and social services on a substantial scale, while the better paid among the 130,000 members of the Histadruth paid up to £5 a month into the union funds.

The main reason for increasing the rates was to enable the municipal staff to compete with the very high cost of living. The official index figure at the date of my arrival was about 280, as compared with 100 in August 1939, and the general opinion was that the official index was well below the real figure. In any case, both Government and Municipal servants had suffered very seriously during the war years from the rise in prices. Many had got into debt, and others had sold their property, till eventually unrest in the Civil Service found expression in widespread strikes, and Government, whose mills had been grinding slowly but not unwillingly for many months in the preparation of a scheme to improve the economic situation of their employees, finally adjusted cost-of-living, or, as they were called, compensatory allowances to something near the requirements of the staff. This involved Government in very heavy expenditure, and it became necessary for the Municipality, whose employees had not been less restive than the Government officers and workmen, to raise allowances to the same extent. To give an idea of what this meant I might mention that before the evacuation I handed to every municipal employee and workman a statement showing the date of his first appointment, the nature of his work, whether he was pensionable and what were his basic pay and allowances.

As I signed these many hundreds of forms I could not help being struck by the number of junior clerks or workmen whose basic salary was, say, £96 a year, and compensatory allowance £236. Even an unmarried labourer with no dependants would get an allowance of more than £150. It is not difficult to realise that cost-of-living allowances on this scale imposed an enormous burden on our budget and that the increase of rates was absolutely unavoidable. In point of fact, even after the rates had been raised the proportion of revenue available for works and the improvement of the town was far less than it should have been.

I might add to these observations firstly my conviction that the increase in allowances decided by my predecessor and the Commission was entirely justified, and secondly, my belief that the elected Municipal Council, whose treatment of municipal workmen I had noticed as Director of Labour was far from generous, would have been less willing than the Commission to introduce the much-needed improvement in pay.

A problem which affected the Municipality no less than Government Administrations in Palestine was that of dis-

tributing posts as equally as possible between Arabs and Jews. This has always been a source of worry to British chiefs, who were immediately shot at by the Press of either community whenever they seemed to be increasing one quota at the expense of the other. The problem was not just one of simple arithmetic or of representation proportionate to the population. Much greater numbers of Jews were available, for example, for technical and scientific posts, while Arab candidates for manual and clerical jobs easily outnumbered the Jews. The fact is that education among the two races stood on different levels. Financial stringency, mainly due to over-spending on security, has consistently kept the Education Department's budget down to a minimum. The greater part of this, consistent with Arab superiority in population, was spent on Arab education; but, even so, the proportion of Arab children of school age for whom schools were available at the end of the mandate was not more than 40 per cent. An annual grant was made for Jewish education, for which the Jews, very wisely, had made themselves responsible since the early twenties.

But the Jews, whose aim was to have no illiterates, have been contributing largely to the education of their own people by means of a heavy community tax, and in Palestine an illiterate Jew is a rarity. Moreover, the majority of Jews now resident in Palestine were born in Europe, and many of them had completed their schooling and professional training before they emigrated. As a result the Jewish pool of candidates for posts as engineers, architects, doctors, veterinary officers, lawyers and so on was very much greater than the supply available among the Arabs. In addition to this, qualified Arab engineers, for example, could easily step into posts in Arab firms carrying a salary which it might take ten years to reach in Government or municipal service. As a result the quotas of Arabs and Jews in the Municipality insofar as the distribution of posts was concerned could not be kept at parity.

In the City Engineer's and Water Manager's departments the Jews occupying responsible posts considerably outnumbered the Arabs, while in the Treasurer's Office there was a small excess of Arabs. Arabs were in the majority in clerical posts as well as in the large force of scavengers, roadmen, drivers and other manual workers maintained by the Municipality. Expenditure on Arab staff was considerably higher than on Jewish, owing to the much greater number of Arabs employed in subordinate



posts for which there were few Jewish candidates, and this was one of the Jewish community's grievances. The Jews paid much more than half of the rates, and therefore deserved a greater share of the salaries. This grievance was not confined to the Municipality of Jerusalem. It was one of the classic complaints of the Yishuv in their criticism of Government.

The Arab newspapers, similarly, took every opportunity of having a dig at the British Chairman whenever a Jewish engineer was promoted or when, in the absence on leave of the City Engineer, the next senior official, who happened to be a Jew, took over his department. It was not of much use to answer unfriendly comments in the Arabic Press, as my letters, however polite, were never printed. Letters in answer to criticisms in the *Palestine Post*, a widely read Zionist daily, which was certainly superior to any English newspaper published in the Middle East, were usually printed and occasionally "improved".

In addition to the Arab and Jewish staff, I found that the following occupants of key posts in the Municipality were British: the City Engineer, the Town Clerk, the Assistant Sanitary Surveyor and the Chief Fire Officer. There was also a post reserved for a British municipal doctor in our last budget, but conditions in Palestine were so disturbed that the Health Department were never able to find a suitable man ready to take a chance with us.

Our Treasurer was an Arab—Anton Effendi Safieh, seconded from the Migration Department, who had had business experience with the *Crédit Lyonnais* before joining the Palestine Government. I could not desire to have better relations with anyone, and I sincerely hope that, in the interests of the city, this excellent official will continue in the service of the Municipality when order succeeds chaos in Jerusalem.

Safieh Eff's second-in-command, Mr. Issa Boury, was a newcomer. He had been Chief Accountant of the Jaffa Municipality, and was an expert on rates and rate assessment. Reforms proposed by him had greatly improved the finances of the Jaffa Municipality, and we should, by the end of the last financial year, have introduced a scheme of reassessment of rates worked out by Mr. Boury, which, while increasing our revenue, would, I honestly believe, have given satisfaction to the ratepayers. Mr. Boury, who had been born in Palestine, spoke Arabic as fluently as he did Hebrew, and could say what he liked in idiomatic English.

Our Municipal Advocate was Maitre Saba Eff Said, a member of a well-known Jerusalem family, with brothers practising successfully in various professions. Saba Eff was a good lawyer and had the gift of acquiring the sympathy of judges and magistrates. He used to win most of our cases in the courts, and could be depended upon to recommend no litigation which had not a good chance of succeeding. He was also able to give valuable advice when legislation bearing on municipal matters was being prepared. He had in his office a young Jew named Kandel, apprenticed to him as a "stagiaire", who published during my year of office an up-to-date version of all the ordinances, by-laws and regulations affecting Municipalities and Local Councils throughout Palestine. This was a most valuable reference book, and it seems sad to think that such a monument of industry may be rendered worthless by the creation of new States with no use for the old laws.

The City Engineer, Mr. A. K. Park, who came to Jerusalem from the Birmingham Corporation in 1928, certainly deserves an honourable mention. Mr. Park's considerable professional attainments were stimulated by a sense of affection and loyalty to the city of Jerusalem and reinforced by a strong and pleasant personality. He was greatly respected by the Arab and Jewish engineers who worked with him, and his devotion to the real interests of the city was known to and appreciated by the numerous contractors, engineers and architects with whom he came into contact, as well as by the general public. The good lay-out and architectural beauty of the New City are largely due to Mr. Park's consistent refusal to relax town-planning regulations during the long period of his service. There were times, especially in the days before the Commission, when he was overruled by the Council, but he could be counted upon never to put up or recommend a scheme which was not in the interest of Jerusalem. To me he was a great support, as he not only knew all the laws and by-laws and regulations by heart, but by the use of simple language he could make my untutored intelligence grasp the technical reasons for rejecting or accepting the numerous applications with which the District Town Planning Commission had to deal.

In addition to the normal administrative and clerical staff, the Municipality had a corps of fourteen uniformed inspectors, who looked like policemen, but were actually invested with lesser powers than the police. Their functions were multifarious,



and if you complained that an inspector was not doing one particular thing, he could and did reply that he was occupied with one of several dozen other duties.

Among their most important functions the inspectors had to exercise control over licensed hawkers and wage war against unlicensed ones. The latter were by far the more numerous. They had also to see that the shopkeepers put their refuse into containers, to check their licences and to prevent boys from whizzing down the steep streets on vehicles with tiny wheels which had a certain similarity to sleighs or toboggans and could easily develop a speed of fifteen miles an hour on a good slope. The Commandant of our Inspectors was Nashashibi Eff, a kinsman of Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, a former Mayor, and his second-in-command was a very good-looking and soldier-like officer named Shueibi Eff, who would have made an admirable aide-de-camp to a powerful monarch. Going round the streets with Shueibi, even in bad times, one felt that it was impossible for any untoward incident to occur.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that the files were kept in English. Almost all the members of the administrative and clerical staff had a good practical knowledge of English, and any attempt to introduce trilingualism in deference to the communities to which our officials belonged would have been costly and inconvenient. Letters addressed to persons or institutions not likely to understand English were written in the language of the addressee with an English translation, while forms were printed in the three languages and signed at the foot of the English, Arabic or Hebrew version, as the case might be. It is my conviction that English is firmly rooted in Palestine, and that even without the admirable activities of the British Council it will have a good chance of surviving as a living language, and possibly in the future as a practical channel of communication between Arabs and Jews.

Contrary to what is usually supposed, the standard of English among the educated Arabs is higher than among the Jews, though many of the latter have an excellent knowledge of our language.

The Municipal Office was in Allenby Square, on a corner of the Jaffa Road. We were housed in a building belonging to us but not designed for municipal offices. The proper home of the Corporation, an attractive modern building situated not a hundred yards away from the office which we occupied in my

time, was snatched from us early in 1947 by Government and handed over to the Accountant-General and his staff.

The object of this piratical act, which was rendered legal by the emergency regulations, was to find securer quarters for the Accountant-General, whose offices, while convenient enough for anyone needing refreshment at Hesse's bar, would have been an easy target for the terrorists. These creatures, who rejoiced in causing the maximum of confusion and inconvenience, would have taken particular pleasure in converting the Government ledgers into charred particles, and would doubtless have done so during the course of the year if they had not been moved to a comparatively safe site. Still, it is not clear to me why the Accountant-General was not installed in the Old Post Office, to which we were unwillingly transferred from our offices, which were at the same time our own property. I was not in Jerusalem at the time of the transfer, and my indignation at my predecessor's mistreatment does not derive from personal motives, though it is not lessened by the fact that all my attempts to recover from Government the sum of £4,000, which the move cost us, were unsuccessful.

The Old Post Office, in which we were housed during the last fifteen months of the Commission's existence, was a roomy but ramshackle and flimsy structure facing on Allenby Square to the north-west and tapering backwards to a narrow terrace about fifty yards down the Jaffa Road. The building also belonged to us, and looked straight across the square at the very pleasing modern building in which Barclay's Bank is housed. In the dangerous times in which we have been living it was a real convenience to have our bankers on our doorstep, and not to have to organise an armed convoy to get the wages safely from the Bank to the Municipality. There were usually a dozen policemen and some British soldiers in the Square, but their presence, as the story of the last few months will show, did not always prevent battles and robberies.

In these hard times newspapers are not able, for lack of newsprint, to publish full and detailed reports from their correspondents, and in this short account of the offices in which I worked in Jerusalem I may have been describing a building which no longer stands. The Old Post Office occupies an important strategic position, and may well have been struck by shells or mortar bombs. Our confidence in the solidity of the building was so small that we were all convinced that if, as was

not improbable, Barclay's Bank were blown up by terrorists we should collapse in the blast like a house of cards.

The routine business of the Municipality was done by the Chairman and his staff, but decisions of any importance were taken by the Municipal Commission, which met once a fortnight, and the Local Town Planning Commission, consisting of the same members, who met on alternate Wednesdays. Various other Committees existed, one of the most important and the busiest of which was the Building Permits Committee, which met regularly throughout the disturbances. Most of the decisions of the Commission were subject to the approval of the District Commissioner, and the Local Town-Planning Commission was a court of first instance, with the District Town Planning Commission presided over by the District Commissioner as a court of appeal.



## CHAPTER I

# JERUSALEM

I PROPOSE AT THE outset to give some account of the city as seen with the eyes now of a responsible aedile and now of a man who after seven years of residence considered himself a citizen and found constant pleasure and interest in the aspect, life and politics of the most attractive town in the Middle East.

In Great Britain and in Ireland, too, whence many recruits for the Palestine Police Force were drawn, returning servicemen in their tens of thousands must have spread around some correct notions of the layout and appearance of Jerusalem, but there must still be a popular tendency to think of it as a city mainly occupied by mosques, churches, monasteries and other "holy places", standing on the banks of the Jordan! It would be a waste of time to seek to correct such elementary errors here, but it is certainly worth while to emphasise the fact that Jerusalem consists of two cities, the Old within the walls and the New without, and that these two cities are totally and absolutely different from one another, and that when you walk into the Old City by one of the many gates you are walking out of the twentieth century into the Middle Ages.

### THE OLD CITY

The Old City occupies about 215 acres. The square measure for areas in Palestine is the dunam, four of which go to an acre. This small unit is perhaps appropriate to a small country, but one feels that it has the disadvantage of pushing up the price of land.

The walls of Jerusalem are high and mainly crenellated, so that the Old City looks like a medieval fortress.

The City is accessible by a number of gates, which, when you ask your way, are not always easy to identify by their European names. These are not literally translated from Arabic into European languages. The Damascus Gate is not Bab Dimishk in Arabic, but Bab el Amud, the Gate of the Column; the Jaffa Gate is the Gate of Hebron (Bab el Khalil), and St. Stephen's Gate the gate of Our Lady Mariam. Herod's Gate, which stands between the Damascus and St. Stephen's Gates, is called in Arabic Bab el Zahira.

The appearance of the Old City is to some extent deceptive. The solid walls and the strong stone buildings, with certain notable modern exceptions like the Dormition and Gallicantus Churches,<sup>1</sup> have an appearance of great antiquity, but in fact since biblical times Jerusalem—and we must remember that until eighty years ago there were very few buildings outside the walls—has been destroyed and rebuilt many times, and the prophecy of Christ that no stone of the Temple would be left standing on another was true for practically all the city. Certain foundations dating from the days of Herod the Great have recently been uncovered, and the lower courses of the Wailing Wall were part of the original outer wall of Herod's Temple. The Stables of Solomon—huge underground chambers beneath the platform of the Haram el Sherif, on which the two great mosques stand—are not reckoned to have any connection with King Solomon, and Solomon's Pools near Bethlehem, though they have been used as a reservoir for Jerusalem for many centuries, are more likely to have been so named in the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent. But I shall be on safer ground in attempting to describe the general impression made by the Old City on one who is neither a pilgrim nor an archæologist.

To me one of the greatest attractions of the place is that for the most part it is inaccessible to wheeled traffic. Motor cars and carriages are unfortunately able to penetrate into the city by way of the Jaffa, Zion and St. Stephen's Gates, but only a few streets are broad enough to allow vehicles to pass one another, and many of the main streets are stairways.

The invention of the wheel is reckoned to be one of the greatest blessings conferred on humanity by man's inventive mind. No doubt this estimate is correct, though in association with steam and petrol the wheel seems to deserve less unqualified praise. In any case, when the wheel for some unusual reason is absent from the habitations of man, the sort of person to whom the mechanism of modern life seems regrettable rather than attractive finds himself breathing freely and able to concentrate with unusual attention on his surroundings. I always wonder if the stay-at-home Venetian, when he gets past Mestre and finds himself in the mechanical world, does not become enervated by the impact of wheels and engines on his unaccus-

<sup>1</sup> These two churches, which commemorate respectively the passing of the Virgin Mary to heaven in sleep and the episode of St. Peter and the crowing cock, are on the fringe of the Old City but without the walls. Most Jerusalemites would count them among the buildings of the Old City.

tomed ear. Certainly the reverse sensation is experienced by the visitor to Venice as he steps into his gondola, and even more when he lounges in the Piazza or strolls without fear of accident down the middle of the street or along the quays which skirt the canals and rii. It would be interesting to learn from statistics if the Venetian, when straying from the peace of his beautiful city, is more or less of a jay-walker than his neighbours from the towns, where the wheel is master of the road.

In the Old City, if one is nostalgically-minded or appreciates the absence of wheels and their rumbling, but needs to be much more on the alert than in Venice, in order to avoid the donkeys, mules and occasional camels which move down the crowded thoroughfares without much regard for what is in front of them. Moreover, the swarms of children, who do everything at the double and play street games over very long pitches, complicate the wayfarer's progress.

There are few places within the Old City except the southern wall and eminences like the Tower of the Dormition Church, from which one can get a good view of the town, and for the most part one feels, as one walks through the narrow and often roofed streets, that one is in a large warren with many winding passages. The contrast is all the more refreshing when one emerges on to the broad and splendid platform on which stand the two great mosques. I used to visit the Haram, as this area is called, fairly frequently with my sister, in whose house in the Greek Colony I have lived at intervals, to call upon her landlord, the Sheikh el Ansari, whose family had been for generations in the service of the Mosque of Omar.

The Sheikh was only a part-owner of our house, which he shared with a number of relatives. As my sister was an ideal tenant, who paid her rent punctually and went so far, to the bewilderment of the Sheikh, as to raise her own rent by ten per cent to compensate him and his partners for the hardships they suffered under the Rent Restrictions Law, our relations with the old man were most friendly.

The old Sheikh, whom my sister insisted on calling the young Sheikh, as his father had been her first landlord till he died just before I came to Jerusalem in 1940, was a strict, old-fashioned Moslem, who I believe derived most of the satisfaction of life from his religion. His expression was rendered rather severe by the orthodox fashion in which his beard and moustache were trimmed. That is to say his moustache was trimmed and his



beard was not, according to the precept "*Qiss shanabak wa rabbi dagnak*"<sup>1</sup>. Once I found an unexpected guest in his house in the person of the Afghan Minister in Cairo, a deeply religious Moslem, who had come up from the worldly and material capital to which he was accredited, to wash his soul in the calm and religious atmosphere of the Haram.

I had previously travelled on a plane from Kallia on the Dead Sea to Cairo with the Minister, and had been scandalised to notice how unkindly the Egyptian Customs people had treated him on arrival. I ventured to say to the official: "Isn't it a shame to treat a Minister like that, and a Moslem too!" upon which the official, who had not realised in whose luggage he was fumbling, saluted and said that all was in order.

Our Sheikh had a son named Ismail el Ansari, who had been educated at the Azhar in Cairo and appreciated my Egyptianised Arabic, though he also spoke very good English. He spent a lot of time in the mosque, and was constantly detailed by his father to show visitors over the treasures, and a pleasanter and more humorous cicerone one could not wish for.

Most oriental cities in which the streets are partially roofed to make bazaars have something in common with Jerusalem, but I cannot help thinking that the Old City of Jerusalem, with the exception perhaps of Aleppo, is more completely oriental than any city of the Middle East, in spite of the number of Europeans one sees in it. The numerous priests, monks and friars, not to mention the orthodox Jews in their kaftans and fur hats, contrast with the Arab-Syrians, Palestinians and Arabians, and the Armenians, Copts and Sudanese, who people the streets and bazaars.

The artist on the look-out for subjects for a new illustrated edition of Morier's *Hadji Baba* will find all he needs and more in the streets of old Jerusalem; indeed, I guarantee that he will find more fantastic and characteristic types, both in physique and dress, than in any place in the Orient.

The smells of Jerusalem are also pungent and unforgettable, but though the aroma of every kind of foodstuffs, fresh and otherwise, hangs heavy on the air, one is for the most part free from the exhalation of open drains.

A fair standard of cleanliness was maintained by the Municipality in the Old City, and the surfaces of the streets, in which cobbles have usually been replaced by flags or concrete, are well

<sup>1</sup> "Clip your moustache and let your beard grow."



paved and drained. One cannot speak so well of many of the shops and dens in which successive generations have lived and died in unprogressive contentment, and there are "rookeries", such as the Souq el Qattanin and the Habs el Dam, inhabited by colonies of Sudanese, often of the second generation in Palestine, who live in conditions absolutely unworthy of Jerusalem, and uncongenial, one would have thought, to members of a race who live cleanly, if modestly, in their own country.

Visits to the Old City after the civil war broke out on December 2nd were attended by a certain amount of risk, owing chiefly to the fact that a large number of "foreign" Arabs, some from the villages of Palestine and some from Syria and the Lebanon, had come into the town in anticipation of fighting and plunder. Most of these men were armed and though they were loosely attached to groups, they were not under permanent military discipline, and many of the skirmishes in which they engaged must have been unauthorised. One cannot otherwise account for the enormous waste of ammunition by the Arab irregulars. As these newcomers conceived it part of their duty to shoot Jews on sight, any European walking about in the Old City certainly took a chance unless he was accompanied by an authentic Arab. My sister used to give English lessons to Poles in the Casa Nova Convent, some little way from the New Gate, but though her lessons were sometimes interrupted by heavy bombing outside the Damascus Gate, a few hundred yards away, she was never molested, and only discontinued her lessons when the last of the Poles migrated to Beyrouth or to the United Kingdom. I used to hear tales of battle and sudden death in the Old City from Mohammed Taysir, a little policeman who was attached to me as my bodyguard. When he and the other Mohammed, my chauffeur, arrived in the morning at eight o'clock to take me to the office I used to ask them how things had been during the night, and usually got a gloomy answer. "*Dowsha*"; "*Dowsha bil istimrar*"; "*Ayarat tul el leil*" (Noise. Noise without ceasing. Firing throughout the night), and so on, and then one heard of the mortar bomb that fell a few yards from Mohammed's house in the Wadi Joz, or the bullet that went through Taysir's window.

One day Taysir was called to the hospital to identify a body, which turned out to be that of his first cousin. On the following

Saturday I got a message to say that his brother was very ill and that he had to go and look after him. As he had not turned up four days later, I asked the police to make enquiries. They had difficulty in tracing him, but finally reported that he and his wife and his parents had removed themselves to Damascus. I missed Taysir, who was a charming little fellow and, being an ex-laundryman, was willing and able to iron my suits when they needed it. He was also a fluent Hebrew speaker, and in principle quite ready to see the merits of the Jews.

The politics and the poetry of the Holy Places, most of which are situated in the Old City, have been described by archæologists, historians and travellers in plenty, and the tale of books which they inspire is doubtless far from complete. Ignorant of ecclesiastical history and a bad sightseer, I shall say as little as possible about the subject.

One of the few reasons why I would not wish to have been Governor of Jerusalem—or District Commissioner, as he was called in the Colonial Service—was because of that officer's heavy responsibility for maintaining exactly the rights and privileges of the different Churches in respect of the Holy Places. The great centres of unrest and contention were the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which were shared between Christians of all the Churches.

The rights affecting the sacred territory, as it were, consisting of wall-space, floor-space, altars and so on, had, after century-old arguments and no slight effusion of blood, been crystallised into a set of elaborate rules and protocols of which the District Commissioner was the custodian, and which an official of his staff had to know by heart. Nevertheless, infractions of the protocol and encroachments by one Church on the territory of another were far from rare. When they were reported, the District Commissioner had to assure himself most exactly of the facts and then, before starting to negotiate, don a couple of pairs of kid or velvet gloves, without which it was unsafe to handle Patriarchs and other Princes of Religion, who held themselves, and were, very important personages in their own line of country. In Turkish days, as is well known, good order was preserved at festivals and ceremonies in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre by Moslem soldiers and policemen, who supplied the necessary element of impartiality.

The ceremony of the Holy Fire on Easter Eve in that church

has been often described. On the last occasion on which I went to it, in 1943, the pressure of the crowd around the Sepulchre after the entry of the "young men of the good families of Jerusalem", carrying tapers and riding on the shoulders of their companions, was so overwhelming that, in order to avoid suffocation, I struggled out of the throng and left the building before the miracle of the fire had been accomplished. In the courtyard of the church I found King George of Greece with his staff just arriving, and congratulated myself still more when I heard that his entry into the church had caused a sort of convulsion of enthusiasm in which one might well have been engulfed.

The Anglican Church is represented within the Old City by Christ Church, near the Jaffa Gate, but lays no claim to any privileges in respect of the Holy Places, or to any special niche in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, though Anglican and American episcopalian clergy may celebrate in the Chapel of Abraham in that church at the express invitation of the Greek Patriarch. In the early morning of Good Friday there is an Anglican procession along the Via Dolorosa, and at Christmas time carols are sung in a chapel of the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem by the choir of St. George's Cathedral and musical volunteers.

The news, which was published as I was writing this chapter, that the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre had been pierced by a shell from a Jewish mortar and that great damage had been done by shell-fire of unstated origin to St. George's Cathedral and the Close is deeply distressing but hardly unexpected. The acceptance of the four weeks' truce which has now been announced is certainly not premature, and one can only hope that during this period the belligerents will honestly undertake to refrain from wanton and careless destruction, not only of sacred buildings, but of all buildings in the Old and New Cities of Jerusalem. Vandalism, desecration and inhumanity have had a long enough run in Palestine.

#### THE NEW CITY

For most British residents in Jerusalem the Old City is a place of pilgrimage and recreation, but it is in the New City that one lives and works and plays and sleeps.

The New City has still a good right to its name, as, with the exception of a very few old houses in the Sheikh Jarrah and Husseini Quarters, there is hardly a building a hundred years

old without the walls. The Templar quarter, popularly known as the German Colony, was built about eighty years ago, and the spacious houses and gardens provide ample evidence that in those days the real-estate agents had not yet begun to get busy in Jerusalem. A few other parts of the New City, such as Mea Shearim and Musrara on the north, existed before the change of régime in 1918, as well as certain houses in what is now called the Street of the Prophets, but by far the greater part of it sprang up after that date. Apart from the business and shopping centres, which appear small in relation to the population, the New City has the appearance of a number of villages or garden suburbs loosely strung together and spreading over a considerable area. It is quite a long walk from Beit Hakerem in the north-west to Baqaa in the south, or from Katamon in the west to Mount Scopus in the east.

The population is distributed mainly by communities, as in the Old City, over the different quarters, but the political changes of the last thirty or forty years have made some of the names misleading. To the south the German Colony, originally a settlement of pious Germans, is predominantly Arab with, up to the end of the mandate, a large sprinkling of British residents and an appreciable number of Jews, who moved out when the UNO decision in favour of partition made their position untenable. Katamon, next door, has a mixed population of the same kind. The Greek Colony, logically enough, contains some hundreds of Greek families, but they are outnumbered by the Arabs. Rehavia, to the south-west, is an all-Jewish garden suburb, while the adjoining quarter of Talbiyeh is shared fairly evenly between Arabs and Jews, although the majority of the house-owners are Arab. This quarter had the distinction of housing Arabs and Jews in fairly amicable relations until the final departure of our security forces, after which the Arab residents moved out and the quarter became a point of vantage for the Jewish army.

The inhabitants of the Husseini and Nashashibi quarters, northward of the Damascus Gate, and of Sheikh Jarrah are almost exclusively Arab, with the exception of the American colony situated almost in the shadow of St. George's Cathedral. This settlement was founded by Mrs. Anna Spafford, an American lady, some seventy years ago, and has been loyally carried on through good times and bad as a centre of good works combined with good business by her daughter, Mrs. Vester, and



her coadjutors. The fog of war lies dense over Jerusalem, and the many friends of Mrs. Vester and the colony must now (June 1948) be anxious to know what has been their fate since their area became a battleground. Another American islet in the same region is the American School of Archæological Research. Shrapnel does more harm to libraries than bookworms, and one cannot but be anxious for the books collected in this and other centres of learning. A much greater source of anxiety is the Archæological Museum, which stands on high ground opposite Herod's Gate in the wall of the Old City, and not far from the American School. The Museum is the most beautiful modern building in the Near East. It was built from funds provided by the late John D. Rockefeller, after his offer of £2,000,000 to build a new museum for the Egyptian Government in Cairo had been rejected as derogatory to Egyptian sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> This building is popularly known as the Rockefeller Museum, but the Director of Antiquities and the Curator of the Museum did not allow us to call it by that name, though I see that in the beautiful photographs of the Museum reproduced in Mr. Henry Kendall's "Jerusalem City Plan" that is the name which the Town-Planning Adviser gives to it.

It is consoling to know that Mr. Iliffe, the Curator of the Museum, remained in residence after the evacuation of the British Administration, and I have no doubt that he made it clear to Arab and Jewish gunners that a shell on that pure white target would be an indelible disgrace to them. The Museum was designed by Mr. Austin Harrison, the well-known architect, who is responsible for other local masterpieces in the shape of Government House and the new General Post Office.

One of my pleasantest recollections is of a concert given in the central court of the Museum by the Chamber Music Society, with the audience sitting on both sides of the long, shallow pool, with the goldfish faintly visible in the moonlight and the musicians grouped on the flagstones under the tower. This open-air concert-hall, never used, I believe, before or since for a musical performance, was ideal for sound and perfectly adapted for *eine kleine Nachtmusik*. I remember being a little disappointed by the fact that the concert consisted solely of pieces for wood-wind instruments, and thinking how fine the impact of strings on the stone walls and water would have been.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Charles Breasted's account of this transaction in "Pioneer to the Past", a biography of his famous father, makes interesting reading.

The New City, as befits a modern town mainly constructed during the period of the British mandate, is well built and uncongested. The roads are asphalted and the pavements generally adequate, and, with few exceptions, the houses are built in compliance with the rules of architectural decency laid down and seldom relaxed by the successive town-planning commissions. In the large suburban quarters there are gardens everywhere, and high houses are not tolerated. Residential areas are zoned in such a manner as to prevent overcrowding and to give ample garden-space in the districts farthest removed in character and position from the commercial quarters.

Those who are interested in town planning generally, and in the town planning of Jerusalem in particular, would do well to read the work to which I have already alluded—namely, the “Jerusalem City Plan for the Preservation of the Old City and Planning of the New”. This book, which is magnificently illustrated and full of meat, enables one to understand to what a very great extent the citizens of Jerusalem—and its visitors, for that matter—are indebted to the mandatory Government, the Pro-Jerusalem Society founded by Sir Ronald Storrs, the first Governor of the city after the British occupation, the successive Town Planning Commissions and the architects and engineers who have advised and collaborated with them. The plans and legal texts contained in this book will interest and satisfy the expert, and the photographs, illustrations and explanations will easily persuade the non-technical reader that the planners have succeeded in their task. Mr. Kendall’s book should be a source of inspiration to his successors, who, one hopes, will be willing and able to complete the construction of the New City in conformity with the present plans and the present legislation. It would be a disaster if, as sometimes happens in the Orient, the new régime repudiated the policy of the old out of sheer cussedness, but I have too much faith in the intelligence of the citizens of Jerusalem to think that such a thing is likely to happen.

Houses in the residential quarters of Jerusalem are limited to two and a half storeys, and even in the business areas there are very few buildings of more than four storeys. In point of fact the town-planning regulations provide for only three storeys, with a maximum height of fifteen metres—less than fifty feet—and I do not know on what grounds the height regulations were relaxed to permit the erection of certain higher blocks. There

are two of these on opposite sides of King George Avenue, each of which is seven storeys high. One of these, known in Hebrew as Beit Hamaaloth, or House of the Heights, got a sinister reputation from the fact that its roof became the fashionable diving-board for suicides. I should hear without undue distress the news that these two buildings had been blitzed.

The feature which distinguishes Jerusalem to great advantage from most of the cities of the neighbouring countries and from Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jaffa is the beautiful stone, pink or golden, with which the authorities have ordained that every house should be faced. In 1918 the benevolent invaders found the Old City, the German Colony and the few other existing houses outside the walls built entirely of stone, and wisely realised at the outset that any derogation from this splendid material, of which there are inexhaustible stores on the Judæan hillsides, would be ruinous to their hope of building a beautiful and uniform city. The headquarters of the General Federation of Jewish Labour in Jerusalem, at the top of Ben Yehuda Street, is constructed in cement, and therefore can be regarded as a blemish, though the lines of the building are not unattractive. I do not know, and cannot imagine, what influence induced the Town-Planning Commissions to allow the salutary rule of stone to be broken in favour of the Histadruth.

In this connection it is worth noting that the buildings put up by the Jews in their settlements, as well as the great town of Tel Aviv, are all faced with cement, and that architecturally speaking they are seldom attractive.

Most of the streets in the New City are planted with trees, and if you look down from the Y.M.C.A. tower, the town seems threaded and splashed with avenues and clumps of green. Tree-planting along the streets of Jerusalem has cost the Municipality a pretty penny, both in trees and tree-cages, and to judge from the state of the streets before the expiry of the Mandate, and the reports of destruction in the first few weeks of the official civil war, it will be many years before the street avenues can recover their former beauty. It was difficult enough in times of peace to protect the trees and their cages against lawless boys and insatiable goats, and I hate to think of the difficulties with which the overseer of trees and gardens has had to cope since the streets have been constantly raked with bullets and shells and every hooligan has hastened to arm himself with the iron rods in which the trunks of all young trees are caged.

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Jerusalem has a superb climate, with a great number of hours of bright sunshine in the year, in spite of an average annual rainfall of twenty-three inches. The nights are almost always cool, and the days oppressively hot only when the Sharqia or east wind blows. This ought to happen during a period of fifty days in the early summer, but in fact the wind bloweth as it listeth, and the periods of Khamseen—as it is called in Palestine as well as in Egypt—are not so regular as all that.

There is usually a fortnight of Khamseen weather in October before the “former” rains. During the Khamseen most of the Jerusalemites, and in particular the Jewish immigrants from Germany, profess to find life unbearable. Most people are sensitive to the Khamseen;<sup>1</sup> some feel it coming before it arrives, and those who think that eighty degrees make tropical heat complain about it even when the wind is in the north-west. Personally I suffer the Khamseen gladly, but almost everybody professes to be poisoned by it. When the wind blows from the south-east heads ache, necks become stiff, witches shoot you in the back—as the Germans explain lumbago—and livers cease to function. Apart from this feature, I do not know of a drawback to the weather of Jerusalem, and I have never seen a clearer, cleaner air—lighter but less dazzling than that of Alexandria, which has a reputation of its own—or a more truly blue sky.

In winter and spring there are two rainy seasons—the former and the latter rains—which fall in torrents and rush with tragic violence into the Mediterranean or the Dead Sea. I always thought the Government should have taken more trouble to catch the rainfall of Palestine before it evaporated or escaped through the cracks in the ground, or down the steep water-courses. The Romans trapped the rain-water in cisterns and reservoirs in the Negev and in Mariout,<sup>2</sup> and how could the seven million people who lived in Palestine and Transjordan at the beginning of the Christian era—if you believe the Jewish immigration propagandists, or if you do not believe them, the three million who certainly lived there—subsist without a far more scientific system of water catchment than Palestine now possesses? One has to remember that the first heavy rains are drunk up instantly by the thirsty earth, and never get into the water-courses. It needs four or five inches of rainfall in a short

<sup>1</sup> During a khamseen all operations in the Hadasaah hospital were cancelled unless in cases of extreme urgency.

<sup>2</sup> Mariout—the coastal region directly to the west of Alexandria.



time before irrigation channels, which are made to carry the rain-water into Solomon's Pools, start doing their duty.

The mention of rainfall in Jerusalem leads me inevitably to the subject of the Jerusalem water supply, which must have been foremost among the preoccupations of every mayor of Jerusalem for many years. A comparative newcomer to Jerusalem, I found it difficult to realise that up to fifteen years ago the city depended for its water on an exiguous supply brought up by pipe-line from the spring at Ain Farah, on the slope leading down to Jericho, to a small reservoir at French Hill behind Mount Scopus, and on the rain-water preserved in Solomon's Pools on the Hebron road and in the cisterns in the Old and New Cities. Fifteen years ago the population of Jerusalem was less than 100,000, but it is difficult to understand how, with such a scanty water supply, the city could survive through the long, warm and rainless summer.

There is usually not a drop of rain between May 1st and October 15th, and often the period of drought is nearer seven than six months. In former days gardens became parched wastes after June, and economy of water in the household was as rigorous as is economy of coal in the land of heroes to-day. At last, however, the scheme to pump up water from the coastal plain to Jerusalem came to maturity and the water-supply station at Ras el Ain began to operate.

Ras el Ain (the Head of the Spring) is a copious natural spring or series of springs situated about thirty miles from Jerusalem as the crow flies, but not as the conduit-pipe runs,<sup>1</sup> a couple of miles from Petah Tikvah and hard by the site of the ancient Antipatris. The springs bubble out of the ground in a green, jungly dell thick with willows and reeds and long, rank grass. There the engineers of the supply station captured all the water we needed for Jerusalem, filtered and softened it and sent it on its way up the pipe-line.

There were three pumping-stations between Ras el Ain and Jerusalem—at Latroun, Bab el Wad and Seriss, where the water was chlorinated.

The output of the springs at Ras el Ain was so great that after a daily ration of more than two and a half million gallons had been impounded for the use of Jerusalem the remainder of

<sup>1</sup> The laying and erection of the pipe-line was a remarkable feat of engineering for which neither the engineer nor Government received any bouquets.

the water immediately formed the Auja or Yarkon River, which had no tributaries and in its short course of eight or nine miles to the sea was deep enough and broad enough for the Tel Avivians to use it for boating-parties and small-sized regattas. There is a project to double the pipeline by laying a new 24-inch pipe, which together with the present line would be able to supply Jerusalem with nine million gallons of water daily without affecting the "navigability" of the Auja River.

The Ras el Ain installation, together with the other pumping-stations and the pipeline, were erected and operated by the Government Department of Public Works, but the distribution in Jerusalem has always been carried out by the Municipality from its big reservoir at Romema. The water arriving at Romema was sold by Government to the Corporation for 25 mils (sixpence) a cubic metre, and the Corporation passed it on to the public for 50 mils. There was, of course, a certain annual profit, which was set aside for renewals, and which at the end of the last financial year amounted to more than £50,000. It is sad to think that by refusing to pay their rates during the last five months of the Mandate the citizens of Jerusalem caused a financial collapse in which all the municipal reserve funds, including those earmarked for the water supply, were engulfed. In January 1948 the Municipality took over the staff and operation of the supply stations and pipeline from the Public Works Department, but as we had no money to pay for it, it is presumed that the plant belongs to that nebulous entity "the successor Government", of which so much was said at Lake Success and Westminster, and which has shown the same reluctance to materialise as a ghost at a séance of unbelievers.

Some pages of my diary are devoted to the security side of the problem of supplying water to Jerusalem during the first phases of the civil war. This caused us the utmost anxiety, because not only did the pipeline run exclusively through Arab territory, but soon after the New Year a force of Iraqi soldiers encamped just outside the Ras el Ain station, and we felt that we were to a large extent dependent on their good-will for a regular supply of water. The general belief was that, as the Arabs in Jerusalem were much better off for cisterns and water-tanks than the Jews, they would suffer much less from an interruption of the supply, and might be able to hold out for the whole summer on the contents of their cisterns, while the Jews would

exhaust their supplies in a month. We all feared and anticipated breaches in the pipeline. These could be mended, but as long as the greater part of the line was in Arab hands the danger was a vital one, as repairing gangs would be prevented from working if the fighting men so wished. A much more serious situation threatened if pumping-stations were destroyed, as it might take years to replace the electric and diesel plants which operate the supply. The Arab National Committee were made fully aware of this danger, and one hopes that all the leaders on both sides realise it, and will have the sense to spare this invaluable installation, whatever other destruction they may consider legitimate.

From the accounts of the water famine which now prevails in Jerusalem I should guess that the scarcity is caused by the lack of fuel oil to work the pumps. Up to the end of April 1948 the supply of oil from Haifa was very irregular, and with the interruption of railway communications one may assume that the arrival of fuel supplies at Ras el Ain and the other stations has been rare and chancy. Certainly the fact that water is now (mid June) being sold in Jerusalem for ninepence a gallon instead of a shilling a ton shows that little or no water is flowing in by the pipeline.

Water makes one think of gardens, especially in the East, where green grass and green trees and flowers are so welcome. The public gardens of Jerusalem are few, and certainly inadequate to the needs of the town, but since the institution of the new water-supply system they have been showing increasing promise, and if, and when, Jerusalem settles down to an era of peace, one may expect a number of the bare open spaces with which the town is studded to be converted into flowery gardens. The most important of our gardens, to judge from the number of people who visited it, was situated just below King George Avenue, but our tenure of the site was precarious, to say the least of it, as the land belonged to the Russian Orthodox Society, which incidentally owns large areas of Jerusalem, and was only prepared to sell at the market price—somewhere about £200,000—which was quite beyond our means to pay. As a garden and a playground for small children the King George Avenue garden was vastly appreciated by the inhabitants of the quarter, but as a financial proposition it provided a permanent headache for the Corporation and the District Commissioner, who, curiously enough, was the official representative of the

Russian Orthodox Society, as well as the ultimate controller of the municipal finances.

We had another very attractive and popular garden in Talbiyeh, with a splendid show of flowers during the greater part of the year, but before my departure I found that in the absence of the Jewish superintendent of gardens, who could only have visited the Talbiyeh garden at great risk, the Arab gardeners responsible for its upkeep had concluded that the place was dangerous for them also and had allowed it to become a wilderness.

## CHAPTER II

### JERUSALEM (CONTINUED)

ONE OF THE minor defects of the city of Jerusalem—and this applies to the Old and New City—is the absence of street names. In the business and commercial quarters a fair proportion of the main streets have names, and often very fine-sounding names. Apart from the Jaffa Road, the Bethlehem Road and the Nablus Road, which indicate directions, we have Julian's Way, King George Avenue, Princess Mary Avenue, David Street, Abyssinian Street, the Street of the Prophets, St. Louis' Way, Suleiman Street, St. Paul's Road, Ben Yehuda Street, Mamillah Road and Agrippa's Way, together with other secondary streets such as Wauchope Street and Storrs Avenue.

In the Jewish residential quarter of Rehavia the majority of the streets are named after Jewish worthies, and it is comparatively easy to find one's way about, but in the greater part of the town there are no street names and, of course, no numbers. I lived for some years in a nameless street, which was alternately described as being situated in the German or the Greek colony. My sister's house, where I lodged, was fortunately situated next door to that of a leading citizen, Mr. Garabedian, in whose upper storey the former Mayor had resided. This was a definite landmark for taxi-drivers and most of the Arab residents, and to make things easier for other friends a brass plate bearing the adverbial sentence "By a fig-tree" was placed on our garden gate. But there were hundreds, or perhaps thousands, of houses more difficult to locate, and your only chance of finding an unknown house was to have an acquaintance whose house bore some describable relationship to the one you sought. Not many months ago I received a formal complaint from an Arab citizen against the deplorable absence of street names, and his complaint was supported by the following story. One night at 1.30 this gentleman was awakened from his slumbers by a telephone call from the Government hospital. The duty nurse told Fulan Eff that one of the patients urgently needed the services of his brother, Dr. Fulan, who had recently performed an operation on him. My petitioner said, "Why don't you ring him, then? His number is in the book." "Yes," replied the nurse, "but his telephone is



out of order, so please tell me exactly where he lives." "Oh, that is easy enough. He lives opposite the house of Mr. Shuisimu in Katamon"—naming a very well-known citizen of the quarter. "Thank you," said the nurse; "we'll send the ambulance to him." The best part of an hour later the nurse rang up again to say that the ambulance driver had failed to find the doctor's house and that the patient's condition was very serious. Where did Fulan Eff live, and would he be a good Samaritan and go with the ambulance to his brother's house, if the driver could find *his* house? Luckily Fulan Eff lived next door to a house known to the driver, with whom, a few minutes later, uttering imprecations both "loud and deep", he drove to the doctor, who arrived at the hospital just in time to save his patient. The irritation caused by this experience inspired Fulan Eff to write me a well-phrased petition on the old theme of the naming of the streets of Jerusalem, on which a great deal of valuable work had been done at different times by mixed committees of Arabs, Englishmen and Jews. It was found impossible, for political reasons, to reconvene the latest Committee, and until better times come the problem of street-naming must remain unsolved.

One of the principles accepted by the Committee for the naming of streets in Jerusalem was that no street should be named after a living person, but it was not for that reason suggested that Princess Mary and Storrs Avenues should be re-named. In Egypt the alteration in street names has become bewildering, and names associated with localities, which should always remain constant, were frequently changed out of loyalty, or subservience, to the reigning monarch or other very important personages. Thus in Alexandria the Street of the Eastern Gate, called in French Rue de la Porte de Rosette, became Sharia Fuad el Awwal, and the famous Sharia Boulaq was similarly rechristened in Cairo. Sharia al Maghraby became Sharia Adly Pasha, though the ancient tomb of the Sheikh al Maghraby still stands where it did, next door to the new Turf Club. Sharia al Madabegh, the Street of the Dyers, has a new name, and Sharia al Manakh has become Sharia al Malika Farida. One cannot help thinking that such changes, for such motives, are bewildering and undesirable. It may be hoped, though I hear people saying "What a hope!", that the most famous streets in Jerusalem will be allowed to retain their present names. The fortress area which the Jews ironically

called Bevingrad will doubtless lose that name when the barbed wire is removed.

I imagine that many colonial officials on being posted to Palestine have felt some apprehension about the possibility of finding what they needed in the way of clothes, linen, household goods and furniture in the country, and have been pleasantly undeceived on their arrival, though their pleasure in learning that practically everything is obtainable has certainly been tempered by the high prices asked for everything from furs to cabbages. However, it is some satisfaction to be able to buy goods of quality, and the controls established during the war were far less rigorous than in most countries. Indeed, the influence of the Price-Controller was hardly felt at all. Shops in Jerusalem are in some respects unequal to those of Tel Aviv, especially in the matter of women's fashions, but there are a number of men's tailors, who would not be outclassed in Savile Row, furriers with a traditional knowledge of their business, excellent grocers and, best of all, a large number of enterprising booksellers, who during my residence in Jerusalem imported all the latest books from England and the United States and contented themselves honourably with the prescribed margin of profit. The bookshops cater for all tastes, but many more good books than bad are to be found on their shelves, and of course some of them specialise in old and rare works on the Orient. There is an appreciable number of well-stocked and well-run Arab bookshops, as befits a community which contains many good linguists and has acquired a keen appetite for Western culture.

Several Jews have told me that you would hardly find in any square mile in the world such a number of good private book collections as there are in the Jewish suburb of Rehavia. I do not know how such a statement could be confirmed, but I have often been astonished at the number and variety of interesting books the Jewish *émigrés* have brought with them from Europe and have added to since their arrival in Jerusalem. This feature in the cultural picture of Jewry will fade out as the character of the immigration changes.

Most of the book-lovers and book-owners in Jerusalem belonged to the category of capitalist immigrants who succeeded in transporting themselves, their furniture and their libraries to Palestine without excessive hindrance from the countries in which they had lived. The immigrants of the future, for a time

at least, will be displaced persons without books or indeed any personal property, except an exiguous wardrobe and a few cooking-pots. Moreover, the younger generation of Palestinian Jews is receiving an education wholly different from that of their parents. The school-children and students of to-day receive practically all their instruction in Hebrew—a difficult language whose difficulties are aggravated by the omission of most of the short vowels in the Hebrew script. This handicaps the learner greatly (as it does in Arabic), and entails for the Jewish student a much longer study of his own language than is necessary for European children.

Kemal Atatürk<sup>1</sup> did his countrymen a very good service when he introduced the Latin alphabet. He could hardly have done this without disestablishing the State religion, and the Arabs, in spite of the fact that Mohammed was known as the “illiterate Apostle”, attach such religious significance to the letters in which the Qoran was originally written that nothing would induce them to alter the sacred script. The leaders of Jewry, in Palestine at any rate, have something of the same feeling about the Hebrew letters, and a movement to latinise the Hebrew script, headed, curiously enough, by a son of Ben Yehuda, the architect of modern Hebrew, gained few adherents. It is easy to foresee that a generation which has to concentrate so intensely on mastering its own tongue, and which is so deeply imbued with patriotic pride and prejudice, is not likely to devote much money or energy to collecting books written in comparatively unfamiliar languages. Luckily the fine libraries of the Hebrew University, the Jerusalem Y.M.C.A. and the British Council cater for a very wide range of reading, particularly in English, and will provide for the needs of the bookless students of the future.

The most enthusiastic lover of Jerusalem cannot claim that the Holy City ranks high as a centre for recreation and the Arts, though music must be excepted from this judgment. There is not a single theatre in the town, and the rare theatrical performances are given either in the vast and desolate Edison Cinema or in the concert-hall of the Y.M.C.A., which is more suitable to and more used by amateurs than by professionals. The Jerusalem Dramatic Society gives three or four performances here every year, but nothing makes one miss the real theatre so

<sup>1</sup> Atatürk's innovation is said to have reduced the time in which a child could learn to read and write normally by two-thirds.



much as attending occasional amateur productions. At the Edison one has the opportunity of hearing the famous Habima Company five or six times in the year (their headquarters is at Tel Aviv), but unless one is a good Hebrew scholar—which few foreigners are—one has to take most of the performance on trust.

I must confess to having been greatly moved and excited by a performance of the "Dybbuk" by this Company, but I had taken the precaution to read the play in an English translation beforehand and to provide myself with two young friends, between whom I sat, and who made it their business to see that I did not miss the point of any situation. But such occasions are rare. There is usually a topical Hebrew revue every year, which is said to be very amusing and indiscreet, but you could not guess it without knowing what the words meant.

During the last few years we have had a Jewish Folk Opera, as the German "Volksoper" is translated into English on the posters. This Company used to play stock pieces out of operatic repertory, and I am at a loss whether to classify their performances as music or drama. They had some elements of both these forms, but seldom touched a true professional level in either, though they shared with amateur theatricals the quality of giving a lot of pleasure to the performers.

One evening I went to a performance of "Rigoletto". I was in the second row of the stalls. In front of me was sitting a friend, the accomplished first violin of the Palestine Broadcasting orchestra. When I came in after the interval between the second and third acts I noticed that his place was vacant, and a moment later a stranger came and sat down in it. I ventured to tell him that the seat belonged to Mr. Parnes. "Oh, that's all right," said the young man; "he has taken my place in the orchestra." I could not help thinking that this pleasant incident struck a typical note for the Palestine Folk Opera.

Of course there are numbers of cinemas in Jerusalem, and film-going is one of the chief recreations of the members of all communities. The best seats cost just over three shillings and sixpence, and with one or two exceptions the houses and soundtracks are tolerably good, so a pleasant time is usually enjoyed by cinema-lovers at a reasonable cost. Personally I find even three and sixpence a high price to pay for most of the films I see, and consequently did not suffer any serious privation when the general insecurity put a stop to evening performances. The lan-

guage of the films is usually American or English, but films in Arabic, Hebrew, French and Russian are frequently shown.

Successive District Commissioners have decreed that no licences shall be issued for cabarets in Jerusalem. Those who cannot do without this form of relaxation can find plenty of it in Haifa and Tel Aviv. I cannot think that life in Jerusalem is any the poorer for the absence of "*boîtes de nuit*", and applaud the resolution of the authorities to preserve the capital from a species of entertainment which in the Levant is often associated with white slavery, brawling and drunkenness.

I am glad to be able to say that Jerusalem affords the listener many opportunities of hearing good music well rendered.

The Palestine Broadcasting Service maintains<sup>1</sup> a good orchestra and gives a public concert once a week in the Y.M.C.A. or the Histadruth Hall, as well as sending out a good deal of Eastern, as well as Western music over the air.

The Chamber Music Society has for the past two years been giving monthly concerts, while talented soloists and combinations can be heard at frequent intervals.

But the most important musical performances are those of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, founded by Bronislaw Huberman in the early 'thirties. This orchestra gives a series of symphony concerts between October and April, visiting Jerusalem once a fortnight and playing to packed houses in the Edison Cinema. Its standard of performance is variable, as might be expected from an unendowed body of musicians, who, in the nature of things, play too much and rehearse too little. The orchestra possesses a large number of first-class executants, and when conducted by Toscanini, Weingartner, Munch or Molinari did not fall far short of the best orchestras in Europe and America. It was a blow to the Jerusalem audiences when the '47-'48 series of concerts was discontinued at an early stage, but one could not blame the musicians, whose headquarters is at Tel Aviv, for inability to pierce the Arab cordon on the Jaffa Road.

A great hope for music in Palestine lies in the Conservatoire which is centred at Jerusalem, with a branch at Tel Aviv. This school was created in 1932 by Emil Hauser, the well-known quartet-leader, and has been giving an excellent musical education to hundreds of pupils yearly ever since. The teaching staff

<sup>1</sup> My use of the present tense is, of course, inaccurate. I may be excused on the ground that I am living in the past and hoping for the future.

is highly qualified and the level of performance among pupils of all ages astonishingly good. Regrettable differences of opinion between the board and some of the teachers caused a split during the summer of 1947, and the rift has not yet been closed. However, there is clearly no room for two important music schools in Jerusalem, and when the accents of peace become audible again I confidently hope for a settlement of the issues which have estranged the two parties.

Organised singing is sadly to seek in Jerusalem. Some years ago the Palestine Broadcasting Service maintained a large choir, mainly consisting of amateurs, and conducted first by Mr. Blair McNair and then by Mr. Karl Salomon, which sang various choral works in public and gave the "Messiah" every Christmas. Then the choir collapsed, but the Arab musical director of the Y.M.C.A. collected some of the remnants and some new elements, and performances of the "Messiah" and the "Creation" were given in 1945 and 1946. There is nothing more exhilarating than singing the "Alleluia Chorus" to a standing audience in Jerusalem on St. Stephen's day or Sylvester Abend. It turns one for the moment into a sort of Christian Zionist.

During my first four years in Palestine I kept a madrigal choir going. It consisted of seven Britons, seven Jews, an Arab and a Russian. We learnt a lot of good music, gave a number of public performances and enjoyed ourselves greatly. The defect of the choir was that it contained too many soloists to produce that harmonious (or contrapuntal) amalgam of which one dreams, but we had our moments of self-effacement, when we did justice to the little masterpieces of Byrd and Dowland and the others. We eventually disintegrated for the reason for which most small choirs disintegrate—lack of tenors. Why is one tenor born to twenty baritones?

More recently the Arab member of our Madrigal Society has been continuing the good work with the Jerusalem Orpheus Choir, which was an Anglo-Arab combination until the evacuation.

Jerusalem lacks an adequate concert-hall as well as a theatre and a town hall. But it seems that nearly every great city is badly off for halls in which music can be heard to advantage. We have lost the Queen's Hall in London and the Colston Hall in Bristol, and listening to soloists in the Albert Hall is a mockery. Hundreds of concert-halls in Germany and Austria reduced to rubble are another aspect of the same tragedy, and if

Jerusalem must continue to have musical accommodation unworthy of its music, one can only feel that things might be worse.

While facilities for playing games in Jerusalem appear meagre to an old member of the Ghezireh Sporting Club, addicts can nevertheless satisfy the normal needs. You can play cricket and football on the stoniest grounds in the world, and lawn tennis in good conditions. Golfers must content themselves with a short links, called by courtesy a grass course, on which one has to contend with fissures in the ground, stones which wound your ball and deflect it—sometimes in the right direction—shepherds with their flocks of sheep and goats and, recently, a cross-fire between the Arab College and Talpioth. A select band of Anglo-Americans led by George Wadsworth, now U.S. Ambassador in Baghdad, formed the Sodom and Gomorrha Golfing Society some years before the war, and used to spend a couple of days at Christmas and Easter contending for a trophy on the sand links at Kallia, on the shores of the Dead Sea, where the amenities of an excellent hotel made amends for the melancholy landscape. The trophy was, of course, a statuette in salt representing Lot's wife. Salt is friable stuff, and after a few years the patriarch's widow began to decompose, and has since been replaced in marble.

Jerusalem is badly off for clubs, and there is no club with an international membership, though there is a great need for one.

Membership of the Sports Club, which owns a good house, eight hard tennis-courts and two squash courts, was mainly British until the end of the Mandate, but it is obvious that it will now have to open its doors to foreign members or close them altogether. One would hope to see it develop into an international club with a preponderantly British Committee justified by the superior number of British shareholders, and, when the lions have ceased roaring at one another, a good selection of Arabs and Jews and, of course, the Corps Diplomatique, among its members—something in the nature of the Mohammed Aly Club in Cairo without the baccarat.

The Y.M.C.A. fulfils many of the functions of a club, and provides society, swimming, lawn-tennis, cricket and football for its many members, mostly Arab; but, for reasons which I have never fathomed, it is not favoured by the Catholic Church, and is consequently not available for the many Catholics of Jerusalem. It is housed in large and pretentious buildings facing the King David Hotel, with a fine garden in front with a

clump of jacarandas, and a large sports-ground behind. The chief feature of the building is a thin tower with a rounded top about 200 feet high, below which, to north and south, stand two large domed halls. The aspect of these buildings is criticised by architects and commented on by laymen, but they provide splendid accommodation and a landmark no less visible than the Russian Tower on the Mount of Olives or the Kaiserin Augusta monument on Mount Scopus.

There are a few bridge clubs, the best being Weiser's, in which some excellent and plenty of cheerful bridge is played. Unfortunately this club is situated in an officially dangerous area, and is approached by a long and narrow passage—just the place for a lurking Stern gangster—and so it lost its British clinetèle.

The United Kingdom team has this year won the European Championship. This should help to raise our national prestige, for there are so many English men and women living abroad who have played bridge all their lives, and every year play a little worse than the year before, that our reputation as bridge-players, in the Levant at least, is very low. One of the reasons why the average Englishman never improves is that he refuses to discuss hands after they are played, on the ground that post-mortems are tedious and a waste of time. Jewish and Arab players have no such prejudice, and perhaps that is why Englishmen who play regularly with them come to be regarded by their compatriots as in some way eccentric.

Lectures in English are organised by the Y.M.C.A., the British Council and the Middle East Society, and until recently attracted good audiences of Arabs and Jews. Professor Isaacs, who has now returned to London University, used to fill the house at the Y.M.C.A. for his discourses on literary subjects, and one felt that while the cloud of political apprehension lowered over our heads it was a blessing to escape into a world of books or art or music or philosophy for a short hour.

For me and many other residents in Jerusalem the greatest charm of the place was the variety and interest of the human contacts one made in it. An essential condition for enjoying the social side of life in Jerusalem is that one should not dislike or be astonished at foreigners. Britons are steadily, if not rapidly, overcoming that prejudice, and the inhabitants of Palestine have had such a long experience of the insular Briton that they know how to take him and how to approach him, so that even



the dyed-in-the-wool islander need not feel in Jerusalem what the Jews felt by the waters of Babylon. And if experience of life, backed by some knowledge of foreign languages (though this is not essential), has taught you that most foreigners are men of like passions with ourselves, you can find an endless variety of persons whose acquaintance is rewarding.

The British official community contained many interesting and attractive individuals, but too many of these, especially those in high places, have strictly limited their contacts with the Jewish and Arab residents of Jerusalem, in the belief that familiarity with either would cause them to lose their impartiality or, at least, get them the reputation of being partisans. I heard with astonishment not so long ago that a highly-placed personage had felt that it would be injudicious to invite the President of the Hebrew University, Dr. Magnes, to dinner at a time when political feeling was running high. Dr. Magnes, I should say, is, in the eyes of many Englishmen, the wisest and sanest man in Palestine, and the fact that neither the Zionists nor the Arab Nationalists have lent a willing ear to his appeals for union has not diminished that reputation. However, it would be unfair to suggest that the majority of Britons in Jerusalem hold themselves aloof from local society. It is only the bad mixers and the over-discreet who do. For the others, as I say, there are unlimited possibilities of friendship and acquaintance in the microcosm of the big village which is Jerusalem.

If he is wise, the Englishman in Jerusalem will make contacts in all the communities, for he will find attractive and interesting people in all, and will give himself a chance of acquiring a balanced view of the Palestine controversy. This may not prevent him from becoming a partisan, but it may enable him to mitigate the extremism of his Arab and Jewish friends, for neither the Arab nor the Jews are prepared, except in rare instances, to discuss politics with one another nor, often enough, do they seem to be even aware of the arguments of the other side.

There is a tendency among the British, and perhaps even more among continental Europeans, to regard the Arabs as a primitive people with, so far as Palestine is concerned, a cardinal grievance. It is true to say that centuries of subjection to Turkish rule and a more pronounced inequality in the distribution of wealth than in Western countries have resulted in the survival of a sort of small plutocracy in Arab countries, where until recently only the rich (and theological students) have had

the opportunity of going to school. This means that the educated classes are limited in number, but it does not mean that the Arabs as a race are in any way recalcitrant to education. The opposite is the case.

The Arab is by nature intelligent and adaptable, though not particularly realistic in his outlook, and is perfectly able to acquire not only the external signs of culture, but also the knowledge and sense of values which give culture authenticity. Moreover, he is continually being reminded by his spiritual and national leaders that he is heir to the race which kept the torch of civilisation and learning aflame through many centuries of the Middle Ages.

In recent years there has been a great increase of population in all Arab countries, and the need for many recruits to the professional classes has assisted the spread of education. To-day there are still far too many illiterate peasants and nomads, but standards of education in the ever-growing professional classes are reasonably high, and are still rising. The number of homes in Palestine and Egypt, especially in the cities, in which the parents have had a fair, and the children a good education is very substantial and, in Jerusalem at least, Arab society compares favourably in education and manners with the society of many European cities of similar size.

The Palestine Arabs are good linguists and quick on the uptake, while their appreciation of the æsthetic side of Western civilisation is beginning to be reflected in their houses, dress and manner of life. Enfranchisement among Moslem women has not made such progress as in Egypt, but it is not unusual to meet a Moslem lady, and those one does meet are notable for their good manners and self-possession. The women in Christian Arab families have for many years enjoyed the same freedom, or nearly, as their men, and their social talents are fully developed. I hope it is not an impertinence to add that good looks are the rule in the younger generation of Arab girls, many of whom have inherited fair hair and blue eyes from Crusader ancestors.

Politics often interfere with friendships, but even during short intervals of tension I have never found my private relations with Arab friends affected by political animosity.

There are a little more than half as many Jews as Arabs in Palestine, but in Jerusalem there are about 100,000 Jews to 66,000 Arabs. Practically all the Jewish community is educated, and it numbers a great host of professional and business men,

in addition to the workmen, shopkeepers, rabbis and religious students. It is clear, then, that the Englishman who wants to get to know the Jews should have no difficulty in finding contacts.

Jerusalem is full of doctors of medicine—some with world reputations, while others are now plying quite different trades—engineers, architects, judges, lawyers, school-teachers, welfare workers, artists, musicians, archæologists, men of letters, journalists and University teachers and students, in addition to the bankers, insurance agents, contractors, clerks and trade-union officials whom one would expect to find in any city. Besides these were the numerous and often redundant Government officers, who in many cases were duplicated for the sole purpose of providing a Jewish counterpart to an Arab official or vice versa.

My work and leisure brought me into contact with many interesting Jews, official and otherwise. When the terrorists intensified their activities towards the end of 1945 and certain quarters of the town became unhealthy for civilian Englishmen as well as for soldiers and policemen, one's mobility was slightly restricted, but previously I and many other Englishmen had been able and glad to see much of their Jewish friends. Cocktail parties in British houses usually had a good quota of Jewish and Arab guests, nor, may I add, were British absent from the many parties given by the Jews. I have suggested somewhere that locomotion unaided by mechanical propulsion is pleasanter, if slower, than whizzing through the air or over the ground in a plane or a car. I would propose that cocktail parties for more than a dozen guests should be banned for the next fifteen years, after which I shall not mind so much. In Jerusalem these parties were usually attended by one person for each square foot of floor-space. The rooms were generally rather small, and the gin, vermouth and sherry often of local manufacture. These ingredients, added to incessant chatter which had to be kept up to a competitive pitch, provided the most exhausting and least rewarding entertainment imaginable. One hardly ever got next to the person one wished to talk with. One was deafened by the din and hoarsened by shouting against it, and if one drank too much one got a dreadful hangover. These petulant remarks are, of course, applicable to all large cocktail parties, but they are particularly stimulated by recollections of Jerusalem.

Luckily there were other opportunities of cultivating one's



Jewish friends and acquaintances and of becoming familiar with some of the elements of the extraordinary mosaic which constitutes the Yishuv. When I was a young man most of the Jews one saw in England (or anyhow noticed) were of the Spanish type—Sfaradim or Sephardim—and Svengalis with or without beards were normal. In Palestine this type, of course, exists, though even among the Sephardim it is slightly unusual. There is nothing uniform about the majority of the Jewish community. Indeed, though many of them could be recognised for Jews, many look like normal samples of the citizens of the countries in which they formerly lived. Those who were adults when they migrated to Palestine import into their Hebrew or English the accent of Russia or Poland or Germany or Italy. The Grand Rabbi, Dr. Herzog, after eighteen years' residence in Ireland has a perceptible Irish accent, and one of his sons is an unmistakable Dubliner.

Apart from these superficial and external variations, there are marked differences in culture and outlook among the Jews in Palestine, which will persist until the common experience of several generations in the same country produces a new type.

I lived for three years in a pension in Rehavia which belonged to and was managed by the widow of a distinguished orthopaedic surgeon from Berlin. My "*Pensionsmutter*" commanded the affection and respect of her guests, for whose comfort she could not do too much. My fellow-guests included a well-known banker, a cigarette manufacturer, who was simultaneously an excellent ornithologist, the son of a British Labour Peer, a Russian composer—one of the last surviving pupils of Rimsky-Korsakoff, the Yugoslav Vice-Consul, a German-Jewish engineer employed by a Scottish firm and usually resident in Teheran, a professor from the Hebrew University and a British ex-consul, who had started life in business in the Caucasus in 1901 and had had a long and intimate acquaintance with Tsarist and Soviet Russia. There was also Mr. Richard Lichtheim, the former Zionist representative at Geneva, who took a courageous public stand against terrorism, but could not induce the Jewish authorities to translate their denunciations into deeds.

This cosmopolitan quality in Jewish society, of which my fellow-pensionnaires were a fair sample, provided me with an unflinching sense of novelty and taught me to avoid those generalisations by which public opinion is so easily misled. When one

has lived in Palestine for some years and has come to know the Jewish community intimately, one's reaction to the question "What do you think of the Jews?" is to answer that one finds them as good and as bad as any other race and more intelligent and less regimented than most.

One of my duties, as I conceived it, in the Department of Labour was to encourage friendly relations between the Arab and Jewish personnel. The task was not a difficult one, and I remember no instances of disagreements between officials on racial grounds. What I do remember are the expressions of solidarity and good-fellowship which marked our periodical gatherings for the departmental conference, and the cheerful parties which followed them. I was also aware that without any prompting from their chief several of our married Arab and Jewish inspectors kept up friendly social relations with one another and were on regular visiting terms. Such good neighbourliness was not so rare as might be supposed, though not so common as the Zionist leaders used to affirm.

A well-known Arab doctor, feeling very sore because his house had been cracked by a Jewish mortar bomb, told me that after the outrage in Ben Yehuda Street he had telephoned to over fifty Jewish friends to find out if they were safe. All this is not meant to show that Arabs and Jews can easily agree on the political issue. They cannot, but when they are not nagged by the politicians they are able to live together on friendly terms.

The Armenian and Greek communities of Jerusalem "vote Arab", speak Arabic as a second language and are to some extent assimilated to the Arab community. Both these groups have contributed some distinguished Civil Servants to the staff of Government, and generally their members can be described as good citizens. I am also professionally in a position to applaud them as rate-payers.

As a result of the "back-to-Armenia" propaganda many Armenians from Palestine, Egypt, Syria and the Lebanon have packed up and gone to live in Soviet Armenia in the Caucasus. The movement has slowed down since the news has filtered through that life in the old country is not without its drawbacks and that repatriates are not free to choose either their way of life or their place of residence. The Lebanese Government have had to deal with a number of disillusioned Armenians, who have returned to Lebanon from Armenia, and now find themselves stateless and without means.

The other foreign colonies are mainly represented by their consuls, and in the social life of Jerusalem the consuls have always played a prominent part. With the exception of the representatives of the Moslem States, who naturally side with the Arabs, the consuls provide a refreshing contrast to the Arabs, Jews and British, the former of whom are partisans, while the latter could be neutral but could not be aloof. The future fate of the country is not a matter of life or death to the French or Greek consul, nor is his national prestige involved in whatever solution is found. The Americans have become less disinterested since the participation of the United States in the work of the Anglo-American Committee and the intensification of Jewish propaganda in the American Press. I felt that the tendency of the U.S. Consulate, while doing its full duty in protecting Jewish-American citizens resident in Palestine, had been to conform, without the slightest indiscretion, to the views of the State Department, which were not always thought to be identical, as regards Palestine, with those of the President.

Many of the consuls are well housed and able to entertain on a large scale, and Jerusalem society is indebted to them for much friendly hospitality. As is usual in the Levant, the French Government have built for their representative a fine house, and Monsieur and Madame Neuville have lived up to their architecture. Monsieur Neuville has also the advantage of being a distinguished archæologist with local experience of digging, and is well qualified for "*des échanges de vue*" with the local savants, as well as with the Government.

He and his Belgian and American colleagues, Monsieur Nieuwenhuys and Mr. Wasson, were in April appointed by their Governments, on behalf of the United Nations, to do everything possible to bring about a cease fire in Jerusalem. Their failure to achieve this end was certainly not their fault, for they showed courage, energy and good-will. Eventually their combination was broken up by the tragic death in action, as one may truly say, of Mr. Wasson, who was mortally wounded while returning from UNO headquarters to his consulate.

### CHAPTER III

## THE MAYOR'S LOG

*June, July and August*

*July 7th, 1947.*

AFTER A JOURNEY that was too comfortable and too free from incident and interest to merit record, I reached Port Said on June 20th, 1947, and left the ship out of turn, having handed my copy of my brother Charles' book, "Atlantic Queens at War", to Captain Sells. I stayed there three days, and learned something of present-day conditions in Egypt. Among the curiosities I noticed was a bench for waiting passengers on the platform of Port Said station which had lost all its bars except the one nearest to the back and had become useless except to sparrows. I had trouble with the railway people because several of my boxes would not shut; in consequence they gave me a warrant for my luggage, stipulating that I must keep it in the carriage with me.

At Qantara, where I had to wait for more than three and a half hours, I was crashingly bored by a complacent Customs officer who seated himself at my table and aired his English at me. When I got tired of him I buried myself in my book and let him talk till he perceived he had lost his audience. I had no sleeper, and shared a first-class compartment with a tall Egyptian Army officer bound for El Arish. I slept very badly and got covered with dust. However, I had some fun, for, looking out of the window at El Arish, I saw the train stormed by a little crowd of light-footed boys who managed to get on board without tickets, carrying crates and packages, after skilfully dodging a railwayman who seemed to be doing his best to fend them off. Their manoeuvres to get near the train in the dimmest light of early dawn looked very mysterious and attractive, and they flitted about in dead silence, broken only by the occasional curses of the railwayman or *ghaffir* who was trying to keep them off the train. I imagine the same comedy is played daily, and that the boys and their merchandise get a free ride for two or three stations every morning. We reached Gaza about six, and a few policemen bound by road for Jerusalem got off. I thought I might be met there, but was not. I had time for breakfast

before we reached Lydda, where Sheila<sup>1</sup> was on the platform, and Jarallah of the Municipality, who had brought down the Municipal van. I drove up with Sheila and a policeman, and brought myself partly up to date with Jerusalem news. Her prospective appointment had not yet materialised.

I found on arrival that I had been allotted a large room in the German Hospice—an establishment which I had, oddly enough (and wrongly enough), rather avoided when I lived with Clarissa in the neighbourhood. The sisters are Catholics, and belong to the Order of St. Charles Borromæus. The house is austere, but it is spacious and dignified and spotlessly clean. It also is embellished at the back by a very large and well-kept garden, with a grove at the end of it in which priests and nuns are buried. A squad of little girls, Arabs for the most part, "do" the rooms under the command of a nun, and they certainly keep things very tidy, though their idea of an appropriate manner of dealing with boots and shoes is not mine. There is also a chapel or church belonging to the Order. I did not go to the office on the day of arrival, as I had to unpack my baggage, which, as usual, seemed excessive.

The next day I went to the office, and the senior members of the staff were introduced to me. I shall have a great many new things to learn, and it will certainly take me six weeks or so before I can drive this team with any confidence. However, during the first few days I began to realise some of the things which it would be necessary for me to know—the powers of the Mayor, his dependence on the Commission, the Commission's dependence on the District Commissioner, relations with other Government departments, the Ordinance, the By-laws, the regulations for the employment of staff, the relations with the co-ordinating Committee, etc. And I must never forget that a caretaker commission is a target for every sort of criticism and that I shall have to mind my step much more carefully than a normally elected mayor.

Security precautions have to be strictly observed in Jerusalem, and in view of the audacity and ruthlessness of the terrorists, it is not wise to take risks. Since I arrived two unsuccessful but very nearly successful attempts to kidnap Britons have been made in Jerusalem. Pound, a policeman, was attacked in Jordan's bookshop in Julian's Way and almost carried off. It transpired that two senior Army officers had looked in at the

<sup>1</sup> Miss Ogilvie, now Assistant Labour Adviser to the Colonial Office.



door, observed that a shemozzle was going on and walked away feeling that it did not concern them! The other case was that of Major, a secretariat official, whose Jewish wife lives in Gan Rehavia, while he lodges in Zone A. It seems that he has been in the habit of visiting her in her flat, and has been observed by the terrorists (who must have a lot of observers in their service). About June 28 he was attacked in the flat. His wife screamed, and I think the Weisers, living next door, also called for help. Major also helped himself, and knocked down one of his assailants. He is said to be, in a way, allergic to chloroform—*i.e.*, greatly stimulated by it—and his unusual activity when they tried to dope him was partly due to the action of the drug. A police car arrived on the scene. The thugs vamoosed after shooting at the driver. In both these incidents the terrorists suffered no casualties. Now (July 13) two “intelligence” sergeants have been kidnapped at Nathanya, which is very inconvenient, as three Jews are under confirmed sentence of death. The High Commissioner, who had the right to exercise the prerogative of mercy off his own bat, must be feeling very much embarrassed. I cannot think he will do anything but tell the G.O.C. and police privately not to hang the men yet. A well-known Jewish lawyer came to see me the other day, and expressed the opinion that neither mercy, ruthlessness nor weakness would make any difference to the activities of the thugs. My personal view is that this is true so long as policy in regard to immigration remains unchanged. When restrictions come off, even if the Irgun and Stern Gang continue to commit outrages, the Hagana are sure to make serious attempts to round them up, and I think they could do so, especially if we promised not to prosecute them for killing terrorists.

This digression into terrorist activities was designed to show that there is more than a little justification for the security measures which prevent me from going freely round the city of Jerusalem and getting acquainted with it as I should. The present system of zoning is new since last September, when I went away. After the intensification last winter of terrorist activities a new security policy was started. Englishwomen, with the exception of those employed by Government, were sent home under a scheme known as “Operation Polly”, as it was feared that they might be kidnapped by terrorists and either murdered or held as hostages for terrorist prisoners.

Most of the women resented “Operation Polly”, which was

the cause of many hardships, domestic, financial and professional. Nor did the bereaved husbands enjoy it. The discontent of the ladies was increased by an enforced stay of two or three weeks in an ill-found camp in the desert near Maadi, a suburb of Cairo, in which, until the Under-Secretary for the Interior, my friend Hassan Rifaat Pasha, was informed of their plight, they had to stay put. Then passes allowing them to come and go between Maadi and Cairo were issued.

After their women were banished, English residents were confined to zones girdled with barbed wire, with a strong guard and road-blocks at all the gates. Most Britons are living in Zone A, which includes the German and Greek Colonies and Katamon and has a perimeter of about two and a quarter miles, I should guess. The gates are at the Scottish Hospice, Claridge's Hotel and the railway crossing on the lower Bethlehem Road. Zone B runs up King George Avenue to the road leading to the General's house, and there widens, so as to take in portions of Talbiyeh and Rehavia, narrows again and goes on to a gate just before you reach the Jewish Agency. On the east side of King George Avenue it includes the King David Hotel, the Y.M.C.A., Wauchope Street and Julian's Way until half-way down the hill. Between Zone A and the Municipality one has to show one's pass three times. If one forgets it, one has to go back for it, no matter who one is and what one looks like. It is just too bad.

I must say the young soldiers—conscripts, no doubt—who man the guards are a very cheerful and well-mannered set of lads, and it is amusing to notice how many variations of accent can be used in pronouncing the magic words O.K. Some of the boys whistle or sing as they scrutinise the passes, and almost all of them call my Moslem chauffeur "George". I haven't noticed one looking gloomy or apprehensive.

One Sunday morning I visited some of the town gardens with the city gardener, Admoni, and Earp, the Town Clerk. We had no escort, and would probably have been criticised if noticed. We first saw a nice little garden under the walls of the Jaffa Gate, which might be developed when the barbed wire round the citadel is removed. Then we went to the nursery in the Wadi Joz—near the top of the hill leading down to Gethsemane. Here there are a great many baby trees in pots, including some scores of jacarandas. After that we went through the Hussein quarter behind the museum, and saw a plot of Government land grabbed by a school as a football field which Admoni thought

should be made into a playground for the children of the vicinity, but you can't thwart footballers with impunity. From there we went behind the American colony to the Nablus Road, and then to Nebi Samuel Road, on the right of which is the North Garden, the antipodes of the South Garden at Talbiyeh. This is mainly, perhaps exclusively, frequented by Jews, and is well kept up, though short of water, and there is a resident Jewish gardener living in a very inadequate house. Our next visit was to the Sanhedria and the cave-tombs of the Judges, where there is a large hillside plot scantily afforested with pines and such-like trees. There are no paths, and the going is very bad, but in a year or two, when the trees are higher, paths should be made, and the forest will become very suitable for strollers and picnickers—I suggested to Admoni that the locality was an excellent one for terrorists to have a "hide" in. He said that it was frequently visited by the police, but he had not heard of any captures.

We finished our tour with a visit to the zoo—my first. After attending a meeting of Friends of the Zoo at the French Consulate, at which I had agreed to join the Committee, I expected something much better than what I found, which was a wretched little enclosure about one and a half acres in area, containing about thirty or forty specimens of beasts and birds mainly housed in cramped and shadeless cages. The lion and the leopard—youngish animals—looked fairly fit, poor devils! but they had no wives, and precious little room to move about. The wolves and jackals were in a dreadful state, and so was the solitary hyena. I can't stand monkeys, anyhow, and so could not judge of their condition or comfort. A few of the ibises and long-legged birds looked well, but it was pathetic to see the eagles and vultures rotting away in small, sunny cages. The garden is to be transferred to Mount Scopus, where there is said to be a better site—I now feel Blake's lines about the robin redbreast, and extend the feeling to other captive fauna, though there is some excuse for keeping a few wild creatures at Whipsnade. It might be an idea to keep them for three or five years and then restore them to their native wilds, but zoologists would probably tell us that a few years of captivity were enough to deprive a wild beast of his power to earn his living by hunting, or that the smell of captivity would antagonise him to his fellows, who would show their disapproval by eating or ostracising him.



A good deal of the last two weeks has been spent in organising a cocktail party for UNSCOP, notables, British officials, and so on. There were all sorts of hitches, but we overcame them. The party took place in the King David Garden on July 12th, with, I suppose, about 175 present. It was a considerable success, though we could get no whisky. A lot of UNO members came, and many others, but no Arabs to speak of, except those in Government service and, of course, Katie.<sup>1</sup> The Chairman of UNSCOP, Judge Sandstroem, Chief Justice of Sweden, is a sympathetic figure with good appearance and manners. He served in the Mixed Courts in Cairo from 1918 to 1926, where he knew Molly and Robert.<sup>2</sup> I talked with various others, including a well-spoken Indian and a couple of Jugoslavs, who did not seem a bit like Communists and were much more communicative than Russians would have been. Hamburger came as a guest in his own hotel, having made no difficulties about giving the catering to Hesse. He has returned from long leave in Europe necessitated by a breakdown after his troubles of last year, and looks marvellous and perfectly rejuvenated, with an adolescent figure. We got a lot of help from the police staff of the Secretariat under Sgt. Hawkins and also from the Army unit who supplied the electric lighting. Hesse provided drinks and eatables. I engaged Emil Kary to hand round cigarettes, which he did very assiduously in my presentation cigarette box, which seems to be falling to pieces and is a poor example of Palestinian (Jewish) workmanship.

On July 13th Heinz Politzer, to whom I am giving a helping hand, came to see me and bought a copy of the *Neue Rundschau* for July 1946, containing three poems by him, an article on Dostoievsky by Thomas Mann and a series of letters by Rainer Maria Rilke to the Fischers of the famous publishing house now operating in Stockholm. Among these letters was a most interesting one headed: "Rodin portraetiert Shaw", in which Rilke takes a lot of trouble to say what a good and helpful sitter G. B. S. was and how by his "*Art und Weise*" he managed to give real life to Rodin's bust of him. At the date of writing Rilke did not really know Shaw's work and had only read one of his plays, but he is obviously enthusiastic about G. B. S. as an individual, and knows that the Fischers, who were publishing Shaw in German, will be interested to hear anything he has to say about

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. George Antonius.

<sup>2</sup> My sister, Mrs. Preston, and my brother, Robert Graves.

him. I thought the letter interesting enough to have it copied and to send it to G. B. S. in the hope that he had not seen it already. There is a nice touch about Mrs. G. B. S., who "*um ihren Mann spielt wie der Fruhlingswind einen Ziegenbock umspielt*".

Talking of G. B. S., I went to a very nice performance of the "Man of Destiny" at the British School of Higher Studies. The players were members of the staff of the British Council. They all knew their parts and acted admirably for amateurs, though, to judge by the apparent ages of Napoleon and the lady, the battle of Lodi was fought about 1808. They used an amplifier cleverly concealed in an inkpot, which was a little overwhelming in the front rows, but as the performance was an open-air one it meant that every word was audible in the remotest seats. The objection to this is, of course, that whispers, low tones and asides lose their value.

### July 17th-18th

There is no lack of social entertainment of a monotonous kind, and I should have to write four or five pages a day (which I cannot) to keep any sort of record of what is happening. On Tuesday I went to a cocktail party at the Capsambelis's, the Greek Consul-General. Mrs. C. is the lady who, about a year ago, wrote to protest in the *Palestine Post* against the vicious attacks made by D. Courtney<sup>1</sup> against the Greek Government, which seems to be a favourite target of the leftists. She dressed him down in the most workmanlike manner, and he must have been sore about it, judging from a later allusion in Column One. I reminded her about her letter, and we agreed that there ought to be a proverb saying: "*les ennemis de nos ennemis sont nos amis*". But that would not work in all cases.

I had a long and interesting conversation with Entezam, the Persian UNSCOP delegate, an ex-ambassador, and a thoughtful and statesmanlike person. He rather liked Dr. Magnes' proposals, and suggested that Christendom should supply the Governor-General and Conseil d'Arbitrage. This might give the Vatican a chance of exercising a little more temporal power once again. It was interesting to hear a Moslem boosting the Pope.

The Planning Committee and myself authorised in principle the building of the new Biological Laboratories in "reconstituted stone", which is by way of being much more durable and

<sup>1</sup> "David Courtney"—the pen name of an English leader-writer on the staff of the *Palestine Post*.

capable of standing greater strains than ordinary stone, as well as being identical with real stone in appearance. It is, in fact, made of real stone, pounded and subjected to strong pressure and bound together with sand and a little cement. The local produce, called Glomit, is made by Mandelblitt at Haifa Bay, but I do not know what stone he crushes to make it. It appears to be considerably cheaper than ordinary stone, as it is dressed mechanically, and not by hand. We hope to use it in our resettlement flats.

On Thursday I spent about two hours walking about the Old City and observing the inconvenience caused by the hawkers to the public and the prejudice to the shopkeepers. Most of them have no licence. In the absence of a public market there is quite a good private vegetable market, or bazaar, in David Street, which seems very thickly populated with buyers and sellers. We went to Hezekiah's Pool, a piece of waste land near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, at present very inaccessible. I could only get a proper view of the plot—about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dunams—from the balcony of the Arab T.U.C. offices, where I was made very welcome. I visited the offices unintentionally, so to speak, but the visit of Mr. "Robert" Graves was recorded in Friday's *Palestine Post*.

On the 18th I went to two parties. The first was for a meeting of the Middle East Society, which is showing considerable activity. Mr. Nimri, who is reputed to speak Arabic well, is one of the moving spirits. At this meeting a Swiss journalist was billed to read a paper on progress in the Orient. When Mr. M. showed his paper, as a precaution, to the Committee, they instantly decided that his treatment of Arab-Jewish relations, to which he had devoted a lot of space, was much too controversial for a mixed gathering in Jerusalem, where the Palestine problem is only discussed behind closed doors. So poor Mr. M. had to extemporise in English and his audience to suffer in silence.

After the meeting I went up to the King David, where Government had a cocktail party for UNSCOP. On my way I walked across the waste ground to the Montefiore windmill. There I found the garden almost obliterated, but a large number of Jewish boys and girls of all ages were playing about under the supervision of the usual earnest group-leaders, while a batch of girls inside the windmill were reciting in unison poems of Bialik.

I think these youngsters belong to the movement of Dr. Nedad, who is trying to turn the young into good citizens by

directing their leisure into innocent and profitable channels—a very desirable goal in a country in which so many of the young have been prematurely debauched by political agitation.

The Government party was quite enjoyable, and as it was held on the broad first-floor balcony of the hotel, there was plenty of space and open air to mitigate the noise. I had talks with the High Commissioner, Judge Sandstroem, David Horowitz and various others, but failed in my intention of “having words” with Mr. Granados, the Guatemalan delegate, who had gone away early to lecture to Tel Aviv about the Latin-American character. Mr. Granados has gained some prominence by his demeanour at the UNSCOP meetings, where he has identified himself wholeheartedly with the Jewish cause and joined in the chorus of hostile criticism of the Palestine Government. My quarrel with him arises from his attempts to show that there is no labour legislation in Palestine and no protection for the workers. I take a very poor view of the Histadruth chiefs in allowing Granados to acquire completely false views about Government’s attitude towards labour in this country, and had hoped to have a chance of opening his mind to the truth of the matter. I believe that he is some sort of a prominent official in the Guatemalan Government. If so, I wonder at his unwillingness to verify his references.

On Friday afternoon there were two more parties, both of which were interrupted by the sirens, the second interruption being due to failure to recognise the first Ramadan gun.

I have just finished reading E. M. Forster’s life of Lowes Dickinson, which I enjoyed greatly.

I have good recollections of Lowes Dickinson at Kings in 1903 and 1904. He was one of the many dons at Cambridge, who opened my eyes to the possibility of fraternal, or at least avuncular, relations between dons and undergraduates, which simply did not exist at Oxford in my day. Proceeding to Cambridge as an advanced student, I found such relations to be an integral part of life at Kings and fairly prevalent at other colleges.

*July 19th*

This morning there was an “*alerte*” between nine and ten, and then Leibovitch, the municipal Water Manager, arrived and drove me and the Town Clerk first to the Water Department’s stores in the lower part of the Street of the Prophets and then to

the Romema reservoir, a subterranean basin fed by the big pipe from Ras el Ain. I was disappointed to find that nothing was to be seen unless you lifted a trap, and then you could only see the water from the pipe flowing into the cistern. Afterwards we dropped the Town Clerk and Leibovitch, and I went on, with a British policeman as escort, to Solomon's Pools, two or three miles south of Bethlehem. These three huge basins, of which the upper one still had about twelve feet of water in it, though the others were practically dry, gained new impressiveness when one realised that by the end of a good winter's rains they are all full to overflowing and contain enough water to supply Jerusalem for a month. The lowest pool is the largest, the highest comes next, and the middle one, which still looks enormous, is the smallest.

Atiyeh, the Arab in charge of the pumping plant, is a very good type. Besides Arabic and some English, he speaks quite good German, having been educated at Schnellers. Above the door of the pumping-station were inscribed these lines:

Prodigium haec olim belli in discrimine fecit  
 Machina quae Nilum transtulit in Syriam.  
 Nunc opere expleto, mutato munere, sanctae  
 Serviat atque Urbi reddat ab imbre decus.

The unexpected inscription shows signs of fading out and ought to be restored.

What surprised me was that my British constable knew Latin and helped me to read some half-obliterated words. I am curious to know who composed these two couplets. There were plenty of good scholars in Allenby's army, and I suspect a militarised don or an Eton Collegier in the R.E. of being the author.

I have tried to render these lines in English, but they are so compact—as good Latin verse should be—that they really would need six lines to do them justice, unless, of course, A. E. Housman were the translator. My version has one alexandrine in four lines (an inadmissible licence), but even so it contains less than the Latin:

This engine once a miracle achieved  
 And with Nile's water Syria's drought relieved.  
 This task accomplished let the pistons drive  
 The hoarded rain to make our City's bloom revive.

*July 26th*

I seem to have neglected this record for a whole week, during which a lot has been happening. In the first place, political



tension has greatly increased, owing to H. M. G.'s brilliant decision to send back the passengers of *Exodus* 1947 to France, if not to Colombia, for which most of them had visas. It is stated and believed here that this decision was contrary to the advice of the High Commissioner. Mr. Bevin seems to think that energetic action of this kind will "learn" the illegals, and that they will stop trying to come here if they are treated rough. Of course the whole traffic on these illegal ships is an infernal nuisance for us, and considering the dangers and the ineffable squalor of the travelling conditions it is in itself an offence to humanity. It is a mercy that none of the vessels has yet foundered.

When the *Exodus* arrived there were the usual scenes of violence, and the naval boarding party was received with jets of hot oil, boiling water and missiles of all sorts. Three of the immigrants were killed or died of injuries, and several seamen were hurt, including one who had his ear cut off by Simon Peter with an axe. Highly coloured versions of the incidents have been appearing in the *Palestine Post*. Some of them emanate from an eloquent passenger. This chap, who I judge mixes lies with truth without the slightest scruple, has told the story with sobs and groans and righteous indignation. Dorothy Bar-Addon, one of the *Post's* most patriotic scribblers, has written it up for tiny tots, and in fact everyone has done his stuff on the Jewish side.

It is difficult to contemplate without emotion and impartially the whole tragic spectacle of illegal immigration—the assembling of D.Ps. on the Continent, their conveyance to a port, the chartering of some rotten, undersized vessel, the engagement of a crew of adventurers, and then the voyage: mass misery mingled with hope, indescribable filth and sickening stench, blended with songs and plays and doubtless Hebrew lessons, and all the time a real danger that the ship may go down either through overloading or bad seamanship. I haven't heard of any of these vessels since the ill-fated *Struma* encountering a bad storm.

*Exodus* was shadowed by destroyers during part of her journey, and the *Palestine Post*, through the mouth of the egregious rabbi, said that they tried to ram her. As a matter of fact when they closed in on her outside Haifa she deliberately bumped into them and did some damage. Of course the result of our Government's decision to send her back has been that a goodish number of British soldiers and policemen have been

murdered or injured and that the sirens have been constantly blowing during the past week.

While one is horrified and angry at the arrangements made by the people who organise these journeys, it is not fair to blame the passengers, who, after undergoing hellish experiences all through the war, and often before the war broke out, and then being kept prisoners, condemned to a soul-destroying inactivity, for months and even years, without any real prospect of a decent life ahead of them, decide to break out of their camps, and are willing to suffer any hardships that may bring them to the only country they can think of as home. That is why the "illegals" embark on these horrible ships with the same alacrity as more fortunate people take passages for an ocean cruise. Moreover, they have no moral scruples about breaking a law imposed on them by a Government which, their leaders tell them, broke its own engagement with the League of Nations, when it issued the White Paper and banned immigration.

During this week I have begun to feel more hopeful about understanding the work and the problems of the Municipality. At first everything was new and strange and very different from the kind of work we used to do in the Department of Labour. Here there are a great many business propositions to deal with, and one has to know the Ordinance and the by-laws.

I have now to negotiate a loan with Barclay's Bank on the most favourable terms I can get. The amount is only £100,000, as Government have refused to guarantee the £500,000 loan we really need. Our financial member says we should get the money at  $3\frac{1}{4}$  or  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, but the former Deputy Mayor, Auster, who is very ready to discuss municipal matters, thinks we shall have to pay 5 per cent interest. Why such a difference of opinion?

The principal problems and schemes I have to worry about are:

*Water.*—(a) New pipeline. (b) New pumps. (c) Who will pay for them? (d) Should the Municipality take over the whole system from Ras el Ain from the Public Works? (e) New piping for Jerusalem—apparently there is money in the renewals fund to pay for this. (f) Eventual creation of another reservoir at Givat Eliahu near Mar Elias to balance Romema. (g) The water rate—can it be collected from consumers? Landlords ask for individual meters, and the Water Manager says that would bankrupt the city.



*Markets.*—There are two in existence belonging to the Municipality, but neither is in use. One is in the Jewish quarter of Mahné Yehuda, and the other on the edge of the Commercial Centre: both are deserted, and will remain so till they are adequately roofed and walled, and even then it is doubtful if we could persuade the public and the retailers to use the one in the Commercial Centre. It is inconveniently far from the Old City. Unfortunately, according to the law, once a place has been expropriated for any given purpose it cannot be used for anything else. This particular market-place could otherwise be used as a garage for the Arab bus-lines, for which it is very well suited. There is a scheme for converting Hezekiah's Pool into a market, but it would cost about £70,000, and we have practically no funds for new works. I have seen one private vegetable market in the Old City which is doing good business. It was rather overcrowded, but unexpectedly clean.

*Drainage.*—The eastern portion of Jerusalem enjoys the blessings of main drainage, and most houses are connected with it. There is a 4 per cent drainage rate. In the west and south of the town there is as yet no connection from houses, though the main drainage pipes have been laid in Rehavia. The finance of the scheme is complicated. Originally a sum of £150,000 was put at the disposal of the Municipality by Government to carry out a drainage scheme with the help of the Public Works Department.

The Municipal Council thought this was a grant from the Colonial Development Fund, but Government said it was a loan. Interest was not paid nor demanded for many years—indeed, the exemption from interest seems to have been a favour conferred under the Colonial Development Fund. However, interest has been demanded as from 1945, and we began to pay current interest and arrears two years ago. Now a large sum is needed to complete the system.

Connections from houses to the main sewer are paid for by house-owners, and the inhabitants of Rehavia are desperately keen to get connected up, as the cesspits are everywhere overflowing. The drainage problem of western and southern Jerusalem is that of disposal. It was originally intended to put up a disposal plant below Malha. Now people have noticed that we have chronic west winds in Jerusalem, and it is feared that the breath of the zephyr would be less balmy if it blew over our sewage works. Moreover, the development of the town in a westerly direction, which everybody anticipates, might be ham-

pered by the presence of drainage-disposal works in that region, though there is a great deal of free space between Rehavia, Beit Vegan and Beit Hakerem. It is not certain that the sort of disposal system which works satisfactorily in England would succeed here. The greater heat of this country might cause the bacteria to go on strike or die, and then where should we be? In any case it would be necessary to employ a number of skilled persons, including a bacteriologist, for a sewage-disposal plant, whereas pumps can be "minded" adequately by a couple of steady bone-heads. We shall doubtless have to do what the consulting engineers advise.

I have asked the City Engineer, now on leave, to visit some model drainage-disposal plants in the U.K.

If the decision is against a disposal system in the west of Jerusalem, we shall have to pump the western and southern drainage into the eastern system over the watershed and let it run down into the Wady Sawahreh. One day we may have a sewage farm there.

Enough of this malodorous topic.

All these schemes for markets, drainage and water supply will cost a lot of money, which we have not got and, with a grandmotherly Government, never shall have. Auster said to me recently that a municipality which owes no money and raises no loans will never get anywhere. He is doubtless right, with the proviso that a Municipality must be able to pay the interest on loans and amortise them in due time. If we bequeath a legacy of debt to our successors we shall, if we have spent wisely, be increasing the revenue, and our successors can borrow more, and pass the burden on to their successors. Result a beautiful and well-found city in twenty years' time, with a debt of a million pounds or perhaps two, and ample means for paying the interest. Incidentally Auster's prediction regarding the rate of interest we shall have to pay Barclay's has proved wrong.

On July 30th we had a meeting of the Local Town-Planning Commission, at which the Town-Planning Adviser's deputy enlightened us on the subject of the proposed loop on the Ring Road between the War Memorial Cemetery and the Kaiserin Augusta Hospital. The Hebrew University wants an alteration in the alignment for the purpose of building an "Aula" in the bulge, but one of our members is shocked by the proposal to divert the Ring Road for the benefit of such an institution as the Hebrew University.

There seems to be a project in contemplation of putting up an Arab University on Mt. Scopus. I am all for an Arab University, but why in the neighbourhood of the Hebrew one? Not town-and-gown, but gown-and-town riots will be inevitable if this is done. Surely a site near the Arab Higher College or beside the Bethlehem Road would be much more suitable.

At the end of our town-planning meeting we met as the Municipal Commission and, having heard the resolutions passed by Dr. Bland's committee for the resettlement of ex-servicemen, we authorised him to instruct the architect to get to work on the plans and ascertain how many families we shall be able to house in the two-roomed and three-roomed flats.

Referring back to a former entry in this record, I might mention that G. B. S. sent me a most friendly acknowledgment of the Rilke letter on one of his well-known postcards written in an astonishingly clear and firm hand. I am lucky to get such a good-natured card from the Old Man Eloquent, who does not treat all his correspondents kindly. He mentioned that der Schlachtenlenker, referred to by Rilke, was "The Devil's Disciple", but he must have been nodding, as I have since found out that it is "The Man of Destiny".

I shall not dilate on the horrible and tragic story of the hanging of the two sergeants and the placing of booby-traps under their suspended bodies. The news has just got out. The British public at home and here are outraged. Indignant soldiers have already retaliated in Tel Aviv by killing five and wounding several Jews in the street, which, when all is said and done, though it may relieve their feelings, only worsens the situation. It seems as if we shall never have peace. The murder looks like the work of the Stern Gang, who are just a little more murderous than the Irgun. The *Palestine Post* and the Jewish Agency have of course denounced the crime, and it is safe to say that ninety-five Jews out of a hundred condemn it, but until the majority of Jews and the leaders of Jewry are prepared to break up the terrorists, the average Englishman will not believe their protestations of horror. Sooner or later they will have to reckon with the terrorists themselves, and either destroy or be destroyed by them.—I sent telegrams of condolence to the Mayors of Bristol and Coventry.

*August 8th*

Since last I wrote, the Department of Labour's central office (the former German Consulate) has been blown up and mostly destroyed. The thugs adopted the usual technique. Six or seven youths armed with pistols came in, carrying a time-bomb, which they placed in the Chief Clerk's room. They then drove Halaby, Bayyud, Rouso and Mrs. Rosenbaum into another room at the point of the pistol, after which they decamped. Halaby gave the alarm signal at once, and the staff all got clear of the building. Police were called, and unhappily arrived in time to start hauling the unexploded bomb out of the office. It went off before they had got it out, and blew three British constables literally to pieces. About half of the building was destroyed, but luckily most of the files were saved. It must be a mistake to allow these very courageous policemen to handle bombs which will certainly explode sooner or later, and probably while they are being handled. In the Army I believe only the bomb-disposal squads are allowed to do so, and the same rule should apply to the police. The outrage took place at 2.10 p.m., and the explosion sounded quite near in the German Hospice a mile and a half away.

The latest political news is of the arrest of the Mayors of Tel Aviv, Nathanya and Ramat, Messrs. Gan-Rokach, Ben Ami and Krinizi. Lord Hall said in the Lords—if he is correctly reported—that these three persons were well-known supporters of the terrorists. This is an incorrect statement, and recognised as such by all who have any knowledge of personalities in Palestine, but as most people have no knowledge, most people are misled by it. I imagine that these Mayors are suspected because they have at one time or another had some connection with the Revisionist Party, of which some terrorist leaders are or were members. I am ready to bet £10 to £1 that not one of the mayors will be prosecuted on a criminal charge, let alone convicted. A natural repercussion of this nonsense would be if the terrorists arrested the Mayor of Jerusalem. I have, therefore, been allotted a second watch-dog.

Liberal-minded Englishmen out here have long been disgusted by the transformation of Palestine into a police-state. It is admittedly a devilish problem, for emergency regulations are inevitable in war-time, and even during the "aftermath", if private armies wage private war. On the other hand, there is, in

my humble opinion, an excessive readiness to use the military rather than the civil courts, and though military tribunals are reputed to be very fair-minded, I can't believe that they are as efficient as the assize courts, with their experienced and able judges and the whole machinery of the Attorney-General's department at their disposal.

The three mayors, according to my guess, will not be tried at all, but if they are, they will surely go before a military court. The Jews, as well as the Arabs, who had their experience ten years ago, assume that it is easier to convict a defendant in a military than in a civil court, and draw their own conclusions with regard to our policy in making so much use of them. The emergency regulations also seem to permit long periods of detention without trial, and that somehow sticks in the gizzard of people bred up to habeas corpus. A friend, for whom I have great respect, said the other day that things are going so badly in Palestine that resignation among British members of the Civil Service is giving place to acquiescence. I think he is right, and that people are getting so hardened to violence, death and security restrictions that they no longer react like free and sensitive men to these successive blows.

#### *August 9th*

Abbas, my Arab bodyguard, met me to-day at the Municipality, instead of coming to the hospice, with a bright yellow face. He said he was ill and had been sick all night. He has been given six days' treatment and replaced by a reddish-haired young man called Mohammed Taysir—a new name on me. Taysir just comes up to my shoulder, and must weigh about eight stone, but he tells me he is a quick and straight shooter.

Complaints of graft in one section of the Municipality, which works in conjunction with a Government Department, have recently been made by a senior Arab official. There has been a cloud of smoke over this section for many years, and the officials engaged in this work in other cities are equally suspected. Belief in the corruptibility of junior officials is widespread in Palestine, but with less justification than in other countries in the Near East, where graft is practically universal. Accusations of corruption are very difficult to deal with. They are frequently anonymous, and almost always vague. Once in a way the information is precise enough to justify action. One of my predecessors would send for officials whose dishonesty was



notorious and offer them the choice between an official enquiry and resignation. They always chose the latter. As a warning to the section now complained of, I have terminated the contract of a temporary official with a bad name, and hope that malpractices will be damped down for a bit.

I have just read FitzGerald's<sup>1</sup> report on the local administration of Jerusalem. It is attractively written, especially the historical part. He recommends the division of the city into two boroughs, one Arab and one Jewish, under an administrative council which will have to decide matters of joint interest to both, such as water and drainage. Such a council will need a strong and enlightened chairman with great persuasive powers. Otherwise the disagreements which have made it impossible to run a joint municipality in recent years will merely be perpetuated. FitzGerald's proposals for the delimitation of the Jewish and Arab boroughs seem to be fair, and will have the advantage of preventing Jewish quarters from being overrun by Arabs, and the reverse, of which there is now greater danger.

#### *August 11th*

Yesterday as I was leaving a doctor's flat a funny thing happened, if other people's misfortunes can decently be called funny. I found the door of the flat blocked by a step-ladder, on the top of which was a pot of cream-coloured paint. I asked the painter to move the ladder and let me get by, which he proceeded to do without first moving the paint-pot. Seeing it was tottering, he reached up to catch hold of it, but, being a short man, he only succeeded in giving it a push, which caused it to upset and pour its contents on a nervous-looking lady who was just coming out of the flat next door. She had paint on her hair, her blouse and her skirt, and was livid with rage and humiliation. I was very sorry for her, but had to go back into the doctor's flat and laugh like little Audrey. It was exactly like one of the knockabout scenes in Charlie Chaplin's early films; though I must say the painter did not behave as heartlessly as Charlie usually does on such occasions. Anyhow, it was a hilarious moment, and even Dr. K., a solemn chap, could not forbear to laugh. I didn't think of telling the lady that under the new Law of Torts (or Civil Wrongs Ordinance) she would be entitled to get damages for spoilt clothing. At such a moment I doubt if that information would have consoled her.

<sup>1</sup> Sir William FitzGerald, Chief Justice of Palestine.



*August 14th*

There has been a lot of shooting during the past few nights, started by terrorists firing at our zone guards. Thousands of rounds are discharged in these blind engagements, and the casualties are usually confined to broken glass. The noise is rather alarming at first, as the volume of shooting is enough to justify the suspicion that the terrorists are attempting to invade the zone. As a matter of fact, I believe no such thing has happened, and that if we were guarded by veterans, and not by trigger-happy conscripts (who, I don't doubt, would fight excellently in a genuine engagement), far less ammunition would be expended.

*August 17th*

Since my last entry there has been a small Arab-Jewish civil war in the Jaffa-Tel Aviv area, and quite a number of people have been killed. It started by Arab gunmen shooting up a Jewish café and killing several persons, followed by the usual series of counter-attacks and reprisals. The last retaliation was by the Hagana, who shot five Arabs in an orange-grove and then proceeded to plant a dynamite bomb in the house of the owner of the grove without enquiring if it was occupied. The house went up, and buried a mother and five children, all of whom are dead. A truly heroic exploit. It is considered so important not to fan the Arab-Jewish fires that the truth is not being published. The Hebrew papers give a garbled version of the affair and state that the family lost their lives through an accident. This is just the sort of reasoning employed by the terrorists when they blamed the military and civil authorities for the loss of life in the King David outrage last year, on the ground that the warning sent by telephone to the hotel had gone unheeded.

The Hagana are gaining a reputation for lawlessness. They have taken a hand intermittently with the terrorists in sabotage, and on one occasion blew up fourteen of their own people on a railway bridge they themselves had mined. Their efforts to keep the terrorists in order have, with one exception, when a brave man lost his life but saved a police building, been futile, and now they have given a striking example of barbarity. In spite of the guerilla war, the usual Sunday party of Government officials is going down to Jaffa to-day to bathe. This is the first

day of Ramadan Bairam,<sup>1</sup> and the Arabs may be inclined to make trouble, though after the hardships of an August Ramadan, with sixteen hours of fasting in the twenty-four, they may prefer a week's rest on a normal diet.

Last week we had our first meeting since my appointment of the Co-ordinating Committee, which is periodically convened to discuss conditions of employment in the Municipality. The Committee consists of the Chairman and heads of departments, the Inspector of Labour for Jerusalem, representatives of the staff and two delegates from the Histadruth and the Arab T.U.C. These for the time being are Mr. Nemirowsky and Shawriyeh Eff. Nemirowsky is a hard-boiled trade union official, who usually demands the maximum, but he has a logical brain and will accept a compromise, though disinclined to propose one. He does not waste time by arguing against any decision that is clearly final, but makes it clear that he will return to the charge at some later date. He understands a good deal of English but does not speak it. This comes in handy, as it gives him double time to prepare his answers and comments while the interpreter is translating the proceedings. The Arab delegate, Shawriyeh, talks very good English and argues fairly well, but less cogently than the Jew. He writes blistering letters, but when you meet him you find him polite and agreeable.

It is clear to me that new regulations covering all the conditions of service in the Municipality are needed, and I hope that conditions this winter will enable me and the Advocate to prepare them.

### *August 18th*

The Ashkenazic Orthodox<sup>2</sup> Jews have got a ruling from their Rabbi ordering them not to pay the education rate nor to accept any money from it for their schools, presumably because they do not want to be dictated to by a secular education committee. I am prepared to give them their share of money out of the rate to be spent at their entire discretion. I do not care how

<sup>1</sup> Bairam—the three-day feast which follows Ramadan, the month of fasting.

<sup>2</sup> The Ashkenazim are the Eastern and Central European Jews as distinguished from the Sephardim, who fled from Spain in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, many to the Mediterranean and Levant countries, though many settled in France, England and the Netherlands.

The Orthodox Jews are those who study and observe the Mosaic Law and the multitude of rules which have grown up around it in succeeding ages. In Palestine they form a fairly large minority of the Jewish population.

they teach the Torah in these schools. The pupils learn little else, but many of the orthodox believe that little else is important. I foresee that this question is going to give some trouble.

This morning I went to see my dentist. The elder Lewin boy—my dentist's son, aged eleven—greeted me in the waiting-room, by asking, "Which is the most important town in Palestine?" I said, "Jerusalem, of course." "No," said he, "Latroun, because it has three Mayors," referring to the Mayors of Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan and Nathanya, who are interned in that dismal place.

I have spent a good many hours lately on the problem of the Jewish shopkeepers who were evicted from their shops when the fortress area was created on the stretch of the Jaffa Road between the D.C.'s office and the Anglo-Palestine Bank. Some new shops have been built farther up the road westwards by a certain Mr. Kokia, and some of these have been rented by persons for whom my predecessor found temporary quarters by billeting them on other shopkeepers, whose premises had to be partitioned. That would seem to give an opportunity to promote to better quarters some of the evictees for whom thoroughly unsuitably premises were found. But of course most of the shopkeepers whose shops were split in two have had enough of sharing and find it a great hardship to have fresh people billeted on them, and it seems that the others now want to let the half-shops at the highest rent they can get for them—which has no relation to the rents which are fixed by the District Commissioner for evacuees. It is a pity that this question was not originally left in the sole hands of the Municipality. The only good solution would be the termination of the present state of siege, with its security precautions, which have immobilised so much of the town.

*August 20th*

To-day I had Sambursky<sup>1</sup> and Joseph Bentwich to lunch at Hesse's to discuss the revolution in the Conservatoire as a preliminary to the Board meeting in the evening.

About three-quarters of the teachers have seceded, joined the Histadruth and have now set up a new school of their own. It is

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sambursky was secretary to the Government Scientific Research Board. I believe he is the leading Palestinian authority on the atom. He is also a poet in Hebrew and a lover of English and German poetry. A man infinitely worth knowing.

apparently their ambition to make it impossible for the director and Dr. Helen Kagan, who has been acting for Hauser while he has been in the U.S.A., to carry on, and I imagine they hope to inherit the music-school, the library and the instruments, as well as the pupils. It is true to say that the teachers had certain grievances, but though the Board has shown readiness to put these right, it has not yet been possible to arrange a meeting between them and the Board. There have been negotiations in which the Vaad Leumi<sup>1</sup> have taken a hand and in which the secretary of the Jerusalem Workers' Council has joined, as the teachers are all members of the Teachers' Union, which is a branch of the General Federation of Jewish Labour. Bentwich has had discussions with the teachers, but finds them very uncompromising, and it is evident that they are not inclined to come back to the fold as long as the present director is in charge. But Hauser, the Director, is the founder of the school, and has done a great work for musical education in Jerusalem, and he is not likely to abdicate. At the present moment he is in New York. The Board is prepared to grant adequate representation to the teachers, and I believe that if the latter had not bound themselves to a trade union, which probably hopes eventually to dominate the Conservatoire, they would come to terms with us. In the meantime we have obtained the collaboration of a number of very distinguished musicians, among whom are Partos, Pollak, Parnes and von Blaese, whose names will certainly attract pupils and who one hopes will prove as good teachers as they are executants. I hope also to be able to induce Mrs. Boroschek, an unusually good teacher of singing, to rejoin the Conservatoire. At the meeting we decided to reopen the school on September 1st, so as not to allow the dissidents to steal a march on us. All of us members of the Board feel the utmost sympathy for Dr. Helen Kagan (the director's wife), who held the fort for her husband when he was unable to return to Palestine during the war, and who has served the Conservatoire with single-minded devotion for many years in spite of her professional preoccupations as a doctor with a large practice.

*August 24th*

This morning, Sunday, Afif Bulos's Orpheus Choir broadcast a pleasant conventional programme. I was roped in at the last moment, and enjoyed myself very much, as I knew all the

<sup>1</sup> Vaad Leumi—The Jewish National Assembly.

numbers more or less by heart. Aff sang "Goin' home" rather well. I am glad to hear that he is "goin' home" to England with a British Council scholarship to study singing and conducting. I think he has learnt all that Rocca can teach him.

*August 27th*

We had a meeting of the Municipal Commission to-day, at which the Provident Fund regulations were finally agreed to, as well as the resolutions we had passed at the last Co-ordinating Committee. In the evening the *Palestine Post* rang up to find out what decisions had been taken. I was at first reluctant to give information, as the practice of the Municipality in regard to relations with the Press was not known to me. Finally I made an arrangement with the editor that someone from the paper should call on me on the day following our meetings and that I should tell him the main decisions come to, unless it appeared impolitic to do so. It seems that the meetings of the Municipality at Tel Aviv are public and are reported by the Press. That course is certainly desirable in the case of an elected Municipal Council, but where, as in Jerusalem, the Commission is appointed and is more or less frowned on by the citizens, we should be "sticking out our necks" if we had newspaper men at our meetings.

*August 28th*

To-day I went to the Anglican Arab Women's fête in Bakaa. Quite a cheerful show, with a large crowd present, and the whole affair strongly supported by the Orthodox, who seem to be on good terms with the Anglicans. The Latins, of course, cold-shoulder anything non-Catholic. A number of young men from Ramallah danced the debka. They wore ordinary Arab clothes with skirts and jackets, which of course make a terribly unbecoming combination for men. Rhythmically the dancing was good, but there was little grace about it, and most of the dances seemed dull and uninspired. Only the faces of the singer and one of the end-men were expressive. The boy who played the pipes managed to blow out his cheeks in such a way as to make an extra bulge in them, and they looked like bursting at any moment. I cannot think that the debka would have any success at Covent Garden or Sadler's Wells.

On August 31st I drove down to Ras el Ain with Grehan, an official of the P.W.D., who looks after the Jerusalem water



supply until it gets to Jerusalem. He took me by an unusual route, probably to avoid terrorists, via Ramallah, Bir Zeit, Abud and Nizam, through an attractive countryside. Most of the road was in good order; indeed, the excellence of the roads is one of the striking features of Palestine and one for which credit is seldom given to the Government. I found a police post and a few British soldiers at the water-station at Ras el Ain. We were met by a couple of Jewish engineers who live at the station, and they took us over the plant. Why didn't they teach me physics at school? I was shown the sites of the new pumps which they hope to erect during the next six months, as well as the water-softening plant, the laboratories and so forth. It was very hot compared with Jerusalem, and the chemical laboratory was the only cool place.

The extraordinary thing about these springs is that they give birth to the River Auja (or Yarkon, as the Jews call it) as a fully-fledged river. The springs have caused the dell in which they are situated to abound in luxuriant vegetation, and there is no lack of mosquitoes. Grehan believes that there is a great deal of untapped underground water in Palestine and that supplies could be found nearer to Jerusalem if one persevered. As a large proportion of the rainfall, especially in the early part of the winter, disappears through cracks in the ground, this is probably true.

In the evening I dined with Mr. Horowitz, the lawyer, who lives, surrounded by pictures and books and companioned by an enormous dog named Lupo, on the edge of Rehavia. Among his other interests is music, and he was the chairman of the Jerusalem Committee of the Friends of the Palestine Orchestra until the Orchestra threw over its friends and officials and joined the General Federation of Jewish Labour. Horowitz was a friend of Huberman, who founded the Palestine Orchestra, and had lately had news of his last days from his secretary, Miss Ibiken. Huberman had been an acquaintance, I might say a friend, of mine since 1928, when we met during a summer holiday at Crans, above the Rhone valley. He persuaded me to join Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-Europa Society about twenty years ago, and was himself an excellent talker on the theme of the United States of Europe. He used to give violin recitals in aid of Pan-Europa, and, I believe, worked hard for the cause in America. Whenever he came to Egypt he used to send me a cable asking me to persuade the Customs authorities to grant



him facilities, and I would call on the Under-Secretary for Finance to arrange matters. Most of these officials were accommodating enough, but one of them could not make out why a celebrated violinist should be entitled to special consideration. I had to explain to this gentleman that Huberman had earned his good offices by promising to play for the Red Crescent Society.

Huberman reacted early to Hitler's anti-semitism, and I think refused to play in Germany after 1932. He was a formidable little man with a forbidding countenance, but was certainly some sort of a genius. It is curious to think that my eldest sister heard him play in Munich, wearing a velvet sailor suit and buckled shoes, some fifty-six years ago. I never heard what his reaction was to the news that the Palestine Orchestra had become a trade union, but I should guess that it was not very favourable, if only because it would weaken the authority which as their founder he still exercised over the musicians. I wonder what instrument the shop steward plays.

#### CHAPTER IV

### THE MAYOR'S LOG (CONTINUED)

*September, October and November*

*September 1st*

This morning came the summary of the UNSCOP report, which surprised and shocked the pro-Arab section of the British Community. Mrs. Blankish, always a loyal, prejudiced die-hard, said at breakfast that it was "the most shame-making document she had ever seen". A fine confusion of thought if, as I suppose, shame is an emotion that derives from one's own misdeeds. Anyhow, pedantry apart, the Jewish allocation is obviously more than the Jews could have expected, if any of them looks at things with unbiased eyes. The inclusion of Jaffa within the Jewish State is a surprise, and represents a decision which will probably not be allowed to stand. Jaffa is historically an Arab city, and, with Haifa allotted to the Jews, it is the only possible port for the Arab State. Of course the Arabs had an unfavourable allocation coming to them from the moment when they decided to boycott UNSCOP. They now profess to think—though whether they really do so is another matter—that their cause is so unquestionably right that they will be able to obtain a reversal of UNSCOP's proposals before the Assembly at Lake Success and, if they don't, that they will get the backing of the whole Arab League and will be able to fight and win the issue in a real war.

*September 2nd*

The Jews profess to be aggrieved by the fact that Jerusalem is to be international and not Jewish and that they will not get Western Galilee with Naharia (where the German language<sup>1</sup> still predominates). I hear the I.Z.L. have broadcast a protest stating that they will not accept the UNSCOP recommendations and will fight till they get all their rights. In Palestine it is obviously impossible to please anyone.

The prospects of the future Holy City of Jerusalem are the subject of much speculation, and it is a question whether the FitzGerald plan has not now become obsolete. It is, of course,

<sup>1</sup> And not Hebrew, the normal language of the settlements. Naharia, on the coast about 10 miles north of Acre, was colonised by refugees from Hitler's Germany.

doubtful whether, even in an enclave, the Arabs would co-operate with the Jews, though it is more likely that they would do so in a city-state acknowledged by themselves than in present circumstances.

If a single municipal administration were maintained it might be necessary to have a neutral mayor for a year or two till the Arabs and Jews came to a *modus vivendi*. It is also interesting to consider the part the Municipality will play in the government of the city state. In a small entity with a population of about a quarter of a million it might be practical for the Municipality to take over education and public health in addition to its present responsibilities, and of course a municipal magistrates court would be indispensable. I hope that the planners will have the sense to consult the municipal authorities, past and present, before establishing their programme. At this moment the whole situation is worsened by the bad temper and ill-will which prevail between Arabs and Jews and by the fading interest of the British. These feelings have been aggravated by the attitude of certain partisans in UNSCOP, such as Fabregat, Granados and the quaintly and ungrammatically named Sir Abdur Rahman, and it will be difficult to get good-will, common-sense and a desire for human happiness to prevail until the atmosphere changes.

Now, if ever, is the moment for a new Messiah or Prophet to appear, and now for the first time I realise that such a prophet, however full of wisdom, humanity and good-will towards men, would fail unless he possessed miraculous powers.

*September 3rd*

I have lately been seeing something of the Belgian Consul General, M. Jean Niewenhuys (which is said to rhyme with Evening News). He is on very good terms with the British community, and has a first cousin in the Irish Guards and now serving on the staff in Jerusalem. Niewenhuys is a charming man and, I suspect, a good diplomatist. He spent nine years in London, and his English is admirable. At a party which he gave recently I renewed my acquaintance after a considerable interval with the Witmanns. Mrs. W. is a daughter of Ben Yehuda, and as I hear she gives Hebrew lessons, I am thinking of having another go at that difficult language. The daughter of the re-constructor of Hebrew ought to be able to teach the language, and I hear she can.

The other day I went with Berger, the acting City Engineer, to Mahné Yehuda and inspected the retail market on Agrippa's Way, which is completely neglected and used by nobody. The reason for this is partly that the place is not properly roofed, and consequently unbearably hot in summer and subject to being flooded in rainy weather, and partly because the local people much prefer to use the street market in Mahné Yehuda, which interferes with the traffic, but is carried on in a sociable atmosphere. We obviously cannot force the people into a market which is not properly equipped, and we cannot provide roofing and side walls without spending a lot of money, which we have not got. We found that the tarpaulins which were originally used as a makeshift roof have been so much damaged by children running about on them that they have been removed and put in store. The roof-tiles of the handsome lavatory have mostly been smashed by children who climb on the roof, as well as throwing stones on to it from below. It seems that the children of this district are mainly Kurdish Jews, who maintain the Kurdish reputation for unruliness.

We went on to inspect the projected site of a wholesale vegetable market for which Tnuva, an important society which looks after the marketing of agricultural produce for the Histadruth, wants to get a concession. The site is very suitable, and there is plenty of land, but I cannot believe that the present owners would be willing to sell it for £1½ per dunam, as the promoters profess to believe. I expect the project to hang fire until the political situation is clearer.

#### *September 6th*

Clarissa <sup>1</sup> has arrived. She came on the *Ascania*, and is naturally delighted to be back in her house and among her friends and pupils. She has been liberated early from the rigours of Operation Polly, because she holds a Palestinian as well as a British passport, and has been insisting on her right to live in the country of which she is a citizen. Sheikh Ismail el Ansari, her landlord's son, turned up to greet her and to ask for help to prevent his sister, aged fifteen, from being sent as a school-teacher to Hebron. We have promised to talk to the Education Department.

#### *September 8th-15th*

On the 8th the Co-ordinating Committee sat from three till half-past six. All the Jewish members turned up in spite of the

<sup>1</sup> Miss Clarissa Graves, the author's sister.

strike in the Yishuv,<sup>1</sup> which had been called to synchronise with the landing of the *Exodus* deportees at Hamburg. Everybody seemed nervous, and I never heard so much irrelevant talk, so that although many subjects were discussed, we came to few conclusions.

Next day I saw the Nahlet Ahim delegation, whose complaints about the drains were heartfelt and, I believe, justified. I agreed to go and verify their grievances with my own nose.

Later on I received Maitre Krongold regarding some of his clients who had been discharged from our service. He opened his mouth very wide over the question of compensation, but I did not fill it, though I gave him a few crumbs, which are more likely to make him cough than to quieten him.

On Wednesday M. de Claparède, the Swiss Consul, invited us to a film show at Ebenezer House, where the chief representative of the British Council, Jock Jardine, lives. The film consisted of propaganda for Switzerland linked to a story of alpinism. The scenes were rather prosy, but they revived pleasant memories and reminded one how solid and worthy the Swiss are and how much the world needs these qualities to-day.

Next day I saw some displaced shopkeepers with Mr. Abbady, who has been interested in their cause since the beginning. I agreed to an exchange which, by some miracle, I can put into effect without consulting anyone.

On Friday morning I had a meeting with Dalgleish, the acting D.C., at his office in town to discuss the future of the municipal garden in King George Avenue. Dalgleish on this occasion represented the Russian Palestine Orthodox Society, who own the land. The Municipality has been using the site for a public garden for a number of years, but has paid no rent, and the owners are getting restive. The area occupied by the garden is about 14 dunams and, according to Jamal Toukan, the Assistant D.C., is worth at the very least £160,000, and how we can pay this price to expropriate this plot and make a public open space of it I cannot imagine.

On the 13th there was the usual Saturday calm in the office, in the course of which I had a visit from Dr. Pomeranz, the Chairman of the Landlords' Association. He is interested in politics, but by no means a political force. He said he thought it was a pity that the Yishuv had not striven to maintain friendly relations with the Conservative Party in England. Foolishly de-

<sup>1</sup> Jewish community of Palestine.

ceived by the electioneering promises of the Labour Party and the strong sympathy they expressed with Zionism, they had forgotten that Mr. Churchill and others among the Conservatives had more than a slight leaning towards the Zionist ideal. The Agency leaders, he said, had ceased to cultivate their friends among the Liberals and the Conservatives, and were now left with hardly a friend in the House of Commons. There is some sense in this reasoning, but Pomeranz was foolish enough to add that he believed Mr. Churchill might still be ready to stick to a statement made in 1922, to the effect that the whole of Palestine and Trans-Jordan should become the Jewish State. Personally I don't believe he ever said it.

In the evening I went without my bodyguard, who had been disarmed through some mistake of the police, to a concert at the Beit Hehaluzoth in Rehavia, where Frank Pollak and von Blaese provided an entertaining programme of music for harpsichord and flute. Pollak played Kühnau's "David and Goliath" admirably. Pollak certainly commands great power and a wonderful variety of tone. I thought his harpsichord-playing sounded fuller and more virile than that of Wanda Landowska, though she certainly played like one of the muses when I heard her in Cairo ten or twelve years back.

On Sunday morning I went to the Dormition Church, where the D's baby was being received into Holy Church under the name of Mary Clare. Father Eugene took the service, and gabbled much less than R.C. priests usually do. His recitation of the English passages was perfectly intelligible. All the apses in the church have now been finished, but it appears that the artist-brother who has decorated them so beautifully has gone back to Europe. Still, there's no cause to complain. He has finished his job, and left a memorial which will delight men of taste and inspire Christians. The band inscribed with two verses of the Magnificat in Latin which runs round the base of the dome is coming unstuck and should be attended to. This church, which from the outside is so ugly and typical of nineteenth-century germanism, is lovely within and grows on one. I don't know any better mosaics nor many modern statues as good as the sleeping Madonna in the crypt.

We returned to the hospice, where the D's had a party for the friends who had been to the christening and a good many others. I found myself encircled by the Y's, and was accused by Mrs. Y, whom I had not consciously met before, of having once asked



her at a lecture given by her husband if she was as bored as I was. The accusation may be true, as I remember that the lecture, which was about logical positivism, was quite beyond my understanding, and I couldn't know that the interesting-looking woman sitting next to me was the lecturer's wife.

I went to a small English dinner the other night at which we talked a lot about races and politics. One of the guests, who has spent many years in Arab countries, found the Arabs completely unconstructive and thought it bad policy for Britain to spend so much time and effort playing up to them. This was an unusual attitude for an Englishman, and surprised some of the others present, but X was by no means a partisan of the Jews, and his criticism of the Arabs was obviously sincere. Generally speaking, though the Jews are an exception, constructive ability is only acquired after long years of independence, which until a few years ago the Arab countries had not enjoyed for centuries. We talked about Samy Taha, the Haifa leader of the Palestine Arab Workers' Society, who was known to some of us. He was murdered on Friday in the streets of Haifa. I wonder what the *Palestine Post* will make of the murder. The paper reported a few days ago that Samy had left the Husseinis and joined the party headed by Moussa Alami. I don't think that was the motive for his murder, especially as Samy was not yet an important political force. Chudleigh<sup>1</sup> told me, and I have heard it also from another source, that a few days before he was shot Samy Taha had made a speech in which he said, "Whether the Jews in Palestine are going to be many or few we shall have to collaborate with them and we had better make up our minds to that from now on." That provides an ample excuse for the average Oriental patriot for killing the traitor, who dares to utter such statesmanlike words. I sent a telegram of condolence to the P.A.W.S.,<sup>2</sup> who will miss Samy very much, for though he was not a natural leader, he was a hard worker who never flagged in his devotion to the cause of Arab labour.

Talking of Arab politics, Mrs. Weinshall told me that when her brother-in-law was arrested recently because ten years ago he had been a revisionist, Victor Khayat (an Arab notable), whose lawyer he was, ran to the G.O.C. and begged for his release, on the ground that he had an important lawsuit pending

<sup>1</sup> Harold Chudleigh, a senior official in the Department of Labour: now Commissioner for Labour in Cyprus.

<sup>2</sup> Palestine Arab Workers' Society, of which Samy Taha was secretary.

which he would certainly lose, and with it a million pounds, if Weinshall could not represent him.

*September 15th-22nd*

A small but obscure ailment has given me the opportunity of making the acquaintance of a very interesting man, Professor Saul Adler, who is, I think, Professor of Tropical Medicine at the Hebrew University. In any case, he is one of the world's great experts in that line. I went to see him at the Ratnoff Laboratory on Mount Scopus. He is a Manchester man, and his speech betrays him in English and in Hebrew. He has one of those heads they used to call leonine, but no sort of a carnivorous expression. He was an army doctor in the '14-'18 war, and served in Iraq, among other places, and has spent some time in West Africa. Since 1924 he has been in Palestine, and is a convinced Zionist. At my first consultation he took my blood by pricking the lobe of my ear with a steel pen-nib with one of the prongs broken off. I was relieved to notice that he dipped it in a jet of flame before puncturing me.

An imaginary scene occurs to me. At the second blood-taking the patient ironically offers to lend the doctor his fountain pen. The doctor accepts, and puts the gold nib in the flame, where it immediately melts. Adler and I have many acquaintances in common. He knew and admired Andrew Balfour and Archbold, and of course knew Ross and Manson and Leeper and other celebrities who had worked in Egypt, including Hindle, now head of the Zoo. Mrs. Adler is also a Lancastrian, and they have two nice-looking boys, one of whom is studying biology and the other must be still at school. The boys are, of course, bilingual, and the Professor is, I hear, a pretty good Hebrew scholar. There are three houses in Nebi Samuel Street numbered 7, and in one of these the Adlers live. I found the others first. As acting Mayor of Jerusalem I suppose I ought to do something about it.

Since my last entry the Municipality has acquired a 16-h.p. Austin for the Chairman. When it is run in I mean to visit my confrères in Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Nablus and discuss municipal problems with them. It is a relief to have a decent car to drive in. Hitherto I had been often reduced to using the dog-van, used at other times for the conveyance of stray and rabid dogs.

On September 17th I went with some other members of the

Commission to the office of the architect Mr. Hofmann to see the samples of "Ramet", a building material which we want to use for the flats destined for ex-servicemen. Ramet consists of large slabs of concrete faced with stone. They are made flat on the ground and lifted by a crane and put in their place in the building. They have the advantage of being cheaper than an ordinary stone facing put up vertically, but the disadvantage is that once in a way a slab falls to the ground and is broken. The most attractive sample was, of course, the most expensive. It will cost about £1,000 more than the "crazy-pavement" sample which the sub-committee had chosen. That is less than the cost of a single flat, but it is a consideration. However, we decided to blow the expense, and selected sample 4. In Hofmann's office I noticed my friend Marcel Noë, formerly a tenor in the Berlin Opera, pretending to be a draftsman.

On September 22nd I received Messrs. Khalidi and Hama-meh, the two Arab members of the Rates Assessment Committee. They showed a special interest in the salary they would get, and were disappointed to hear that we intended to pay them a lump sum, and not by the day. However, as the sum proposed seems really inadequate, I shall try to get the Commission to increase it. Khalidi, a smart-looking old buck, is a cousin of the late Mayor. He is obviously accustomed to spending money, and needs some more. He does not speak English, but his colleague is fluent, and their chairman, Mr. Boury, speaks excellent Arabic and English. I hear that in spite of their preoccupation with the question of their salary both of these gentlemen are efficient and reasonably industrious.

### *September 26th*

To-day I was visited in the office by Alderman Abraham Moss, J.P., from Manchester, who brought a letter of introduction from the Lord Mayor of his city. Mr. Moss seems to be greatly interested in Zionism, but hopes that Great Britain will stay long enough in Palestine to enable the Jewish State, if partition is agreed on, to be peacefully established.

In the late afternoon the Attorney-General and I qualified for the final in the veterans' lawn-tennis doubles.

After dinner Clarissa and I went to the Scottish Hospice, where we heard a lecture by Colonel B. E. Fergusson, one of the Assistant Inspectors-General of Police seconded from the Black Watch, I think. He talked about two of the phases of the Burma

campaign, where he was with Wingate and the Chindits. Fergusson, who is a son of a former Governor-General of New Zealand, is a talented, lively man of under forty. He commanded a brigade in the war. He gave a very pleasant lecture, delivered with great ease, and made his points well. He has written two successful books, and is said to write good light verse. Anyhow, he contributes from time to time to *Punch*, to whom he was introduced by my Uncle Charlie.<sup>1</sup>

*September 28th*

To-day I started a new series of Hebrew lessons. It seems like an act of faith, but even more like an act of folly, to restart Hebrew at this juncture.

The latest news from London and New York is that Britain is quite determined to give up the Mandate. To this expression of Britain's will Mr. Creech Jones has added the statement that if UNO recommended a policy not acceptable to the Jews and the Arabs, H.M.G. would not feel able to implement it, and it would become necessary to provide an alternative authority to do so.

In the absence of a settlement, Britain must plan for an early withdrawal of all British Forces and the British Administration from Palestine, as H.M.G. is not prepared to impose a policy by force of arms.

H.M.G. endorsed UNSCOP's recommendation that independence be granted to Palestine at the earliest possible date.

H.M.G. is not prepared to co-operate in enforcing a settlement without taking into account both the inherent justice of the settlement and the extent to which force would be required to give effect to it.

I copied these declarations, which, by the way, are not wholly consistent with one another, from the *Mid-East Mail*, which published them as official.

The impression created by this declaration of policy—save the mark!—is that H.M.G. have got the sulks and that the English are losing their grip. After occupying this country for nearly thirty years and conferring great benefits upon it (though we might have done more) and establishing a pretty good system of justice and administration, H.M.G. are apparently prepared to scuttle out of Palestine without handing over the reins of government to the successor States in due form and order, and without

<sup>1</sup> The late C. L. Graves.

caring a damn what happens as long as we are spending no money and losing no lives in this country. It may be that the directors of our policy think that by washing our hands of Palestinian affairs we shall either force the Jews and Arabs, who are neither really anxious for a civil war, to make peace, or compel UNO to assume the responsibility for the transfer of authority, and that some great Power like the U.S.A. will accept the charge of implementing it. Regarding both thoughts I am tempted to say, "What a hope!"

In point of fact there is a good chance of a quarrel over the question of trusteeship—and, after all, there will have to be a trusteeship for Jerusalem, if an international enclave is created here—and if at any moment there is a vacuum (which our Government, unlike nature, does not seem to abhor), there will be civil strife, with much bloodshed and general anarchy, and possibly a great deal of the hard-won wealth of the country will be destroyed. It was pointed out to me to-day that there is a possibility of a three-cornered civil war, as Abdallah hates the Mufti and the Husseinis generally, and is very likely to make a bid to become the ruler of Palestine, or at least of Arab Palestine. We should then have a kind of "all against all" similar to the shemozzle that took place after the war between the Balkan States and Turkey in 1913. Other Arab States may then take sides for or against Abdallah, and the Jews will of course receive reinforcements from America, England and other countries, and a conflagration will start which may well give rise to another world war. At the best there is a grave chance of economic chaos and the breakdown of government if we walk out without putting through a properly conceived scheme for the transfer of authority. Wasn't it Louis XIV who said "Après moi le déluge"? We are going one better, and deserting the dam we have built up, leaving a time-bomb to blow it up when we have got out of the area. It is difficult to take this declaration seriously. If it is meant seriously, I can't comment without profanity. If it is not serious, it is a very bad and undignified joke which has had disastrous consequences, as our apparent abdication of responsibility has already undermined the confidence of those people for whom we have done so much and whose esteem we still possessed till a very short time ago.

Another consequence of the nervelessness of our rulers is the inevitable demoralisation of the British personnel of the Palestine Government, most of whom, while fully prepared to work



loyally to secure the orderly transfer of the administration to their Jewish and Arab successors, contemplate with disgust and resentment the prospect of handing over their authority to persons utterly unprepared to receive it from them and, with what feelings, that of deserting their posts in a general stampede and leaving chaos behind them.

The transfer of Government from the present régime to that imposed by UNO cannot take less than three years, if it is to be carried out efficiently, and might need four. This should be laid down as a start, and Government should be instructed immediately to appoint a considerable number of Palestinians to responsible posts in every department in replacement of an equal number of British officials, who should be transferred to British Territories elsewhere.

An Arab and a Jewish assistant director should be appointed in each department, and at least six other officers in the senior grades, except in the small technical departments, where that number of first-division Civil Servants does not exist. The appointments should be made in consultation, as far as is possible, with the Arab and Jewish leaders, and it should be admissible to appoint persons not at present in Government service.

Jewish immigration should be stepped up to 5,000 a month, which is probably more than the Jewish Agency can absorb. At the same time the scale and purchase of land in the territory earmarked for the Jewish State should be freed from restrictions.

Arrangements should immediately be made to assure the payment of pensions, interest on loans, etc., for the future, and to introduce at once a much larger measure of local government than now exists. Municipalities should be freed from the control of the district administration, but supervised from afar by the Municipal Adviser. There might be a few crashes, but nobody has ever learned to ride a bicycle with someone else holding the handle-bars, and I guarantee that the Municipalities of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jaffa would carry on without disaster. Jewish and Arab city police should be put in charge of security in the respective cities. In Jerusalem and Haifa there would have to be a joint force, with British Commandants and Jewish and Arab Assistant Commandants. The British Army should be reduced to two divisions, with orders to refrain from interfering with the civil population except in the event of pillage and massacre with which the police could not cope. If a civil war breaks out during the transition period, Britain must



insist on military support from UNO, and the armed forces should deal ruthlessly with aggressors. The Jews are unlikely to start anything, and the Arabs will consequently be the greater sufferers if they attack the Jews. If it is made clear that the aggressors will be treated very roughly, they may keep quiet throughout the transition stage, and after three or four years of peace they may be prepared to settle down to a state of *bon voisinage*.

I make these suggestions regarding security with diffidence, and realise that any good soldier or policeman should be capable of a better plan, but I should hope that policy will in future always be preferred to security, meaning thereby that good policy results in a greater degree of security than any amount of police and military precautions. Generals and Police Chiefs should be reminded of Lord Plumer's famous retort to the Mufti when the latter told H.E. that he would not be responsible for public order if certain action were taken. "You are not responsible anyhow"—said the Field-Marshal—"I am responsible."

There would be all sorts of difficulties in carrying out such a programme, and it cannot be successfully carried out if Arabs are allowed to hope that they will ever be permitted to drive the Jews out of Palestine or prevent the immigration of Jews up to parity with the Arab population in the whole of Palestine. In fact, this will never happen, though one cannot get the Arabs to believe it, thanks to the propaganda of Ben Gurion and the extreme Zionists.

Meantime economic help and, if they ask for it, administrative advice should be given generously to the Arabs, and everything possible should be done to help them develop their territories in Palestine and Transjordan.

To conceive and carry out such a policy needs firmness, generosity, imagination and good temper—qualities that unfortunately seem to have grown rare both among our rulers and the generality of our war-worn nation.

*October 6th, 1947*

The dumbness of the Palestine Government in interpreting our policy to the people of this country and our silence in the face of criticism which often sounds justified impel me to some supplementary reflections. Nothing defeats its own ends more surely than propaganda which is not, *grosso modo*, based on the

truth. The Government of Palestine cannot fairly be accused of publishing false statements in defence of their policy, though in fact they and H.M.G. are constantly accused of this by Jews and Arabs in the local Press. Occasionally definite mis-statements have been made in official announcements, and more often statements in defence of policy have been given a tendentious twist which has detracted from their force. *Suppressio veri* is not an unknown feature of our publicity. All this is a pity because, by and large, we are the greatest truth addicts of all the big nations. Most Britons tell lies reluctantly and inefficiently, and do not excuse their rulers when they shirk or disfigure the truth.

As compared with individuals, Governments are badly handicapped by a convention which arises from their relation towards the people they govern. They cannot afford to lose the confidence of their subjects by admitting that they have made bad mistakes—when they do, they must abdicate, resign office or be overthrown. There is nothing abnormal about this in a country in which constitutional government prevails and in which the Press of the Opposition and of Government are always there to argue about the merits of policies and the manner in which they have been carried out. The Government of Palestine, which is the purest form of bureaucracy imaginable, has no Press of its own and no means of answering the criticism of the local newspapers, which are all in varying degrees hostile, except by *communiqués* published in those very newspapers. It is unthinkable that a *communiqué* should contain an admission of error or guilt, so the official *communiqués* in this country have to limit themselves to justifying action or correcting misinformation. As the form of *communiqués* is conventionally rigid and austere, and excludes the eloquence of the pleader, they cannot be expected to make many converts.

It would long ago have been worth while for Government to subsidise an English newspaper and give it a free hand to criticise as well as a general mandate to support Government policy. An important and grateful function of such a paper would have been to launch counter-attacks against the criticism of the local newspapers, and this could have been done much more conveniently here than in Egypt, where the European Press is for all political purposes muzzled. Radio broadcasts in Palestine have occasionally been utilised for purposes of propaganda, but they have often enough been badly edited or delivered by unsympathetic speakers.

Nothing more painfully depressing or humiliating could have been devised than to-night's broadcast, in which the speaker endeavoured to persuade his Palestinian listeners to believe that Mr. Creech Jones's declaration of surrender was uttered in dead earnest. The broadcast was couched in solemn language worthy of a better theme and seasoned with literary allusions, including a quotation from a poem by Chesterton, who was evidently suffering from an overdose of Kipling when he wrote it. Kipling would turn in his grave to think of his idiom being put to such uses. That this stuff (not, I am sure, the broadcaster's own) should have been put on the air is painfully significant, and inclines me to believe that unless a special effort is made, H.M.G. will carry out their promise and leave this country to become a prey to anarchy and civil war.

October 7th

Such time as I have given to this record during the past week has been devoted to politics, and I have extracted the pages containing my views on the Creech Jones declaration and intend to make some use of them, though I don't know exactly what. If Mr. Attlee read them I believe he would think again, but his reaction might be to say, "This fellow is exaggerating very much: of course we shall hand things over in good order. In the meantime it is not a bad idea to give the Jews and Arabs and Yankees and *tutti quanti* a bit of a jolt. We have had nothing but ingratitude and resentment from the local peoples, and all the solutions we have proposed have been spoilt by the Americans going off at half-cock. Now we have made it clear to UNO that we are going out and are giving them time to find a successor." <sup>1</sup>

The other day "David Courtney" wrote an apologia in Column I of the *Palestine Post* for the murder of Petkoff. I wrote an indignant letter to the *Post* saying what I thought of the article, which was typical of our local marxian parson. The article contained a good deal of the special information of which "Courtney" has a monopoly in Palestine. Lurie, the acting editor, refused to publish my letter, professing to think that I had not made out a case disproving "Courtney's" insinuation that Pet-

<sup>1</sup> If the Prime Minister would have reasoned differently, I can only apologise. When I wrote this I was trying to find an intelligible interpretation of British policy.

koff was connected with foreign espionage in Bulgaria, which I had not tried to do. The object of my letter was to protest against Column I's condonation of a judicial murder, and not to prove "Courtney's" rigmarole untrue. Petkoff may have had contacts with persons interested in replacing the communist regime in Bulgaria, but that would hardly excuse his judicial murder. I hope "Courtney" eventually read what the *New Statesman* had to say about Petkoff before he was put to death.

One day last week we had a tea-party to which Dr. Helen Kagan, Cécile Leibovitch and Fathers Antony and Lazarus came. Father Antony is the Archimandrite of the Russian Orthodox Church here (but owing no allegiance to the Metropolitan of Moscow): he is an impressive figure, and I believe a great influence for good in his community. Father Lazarus is an Englishman with a long golden beard, who was received years ago into the Russian Orthodox Church, and leads a retired and saintly life. I am told that he reads the liturgy in ancient Slavonic as to the manner born.

I made Cecile Leibovitch play on my piano. She has lately graduated at the Conservatoire as a concert artist and is, for her age, a most accomplished pianist.

The Arabs are beginning to show their hand. Bombs have been exploded in the Polish and U.S.A. Consulates, more by way of a demonstration than anything else, though they were powerful enough to destroy life.

*October 15th*

Reverting to the Creech Jones declaration, about which I filled several pages of this diary, I seem to have been mistaken in thinking that most British officials were outraged by the prospect of clearing out without handing over. I had a talk with X on Sunday. He personally was deeply distressed about the whole matter, but very hopeless. He said that H.M.G. refused to listen to argument, and that the British public were sick of the name of Palestine and were serious about wanting to cut the connection without more ado. He seemed to think that his view and mine, that we could not leave the country a prey to chaos, was not shared by the majority of Civil Servants, especially the numerous newcomers, who had no real interest in or knowledge of Palestine. This was more or less confirmed by Nimry, who told me yesterday that most Civil Servants he had spoken to

were unmoved by the moral aspect of H.M.G.'s policy and were glad to exchange a country which provided perpetual headaches for easier jobs in territories where they would be welcome.

*October 25th*

There has not been much to write about during the past ten days. I gave a copy of my political note on the Creech Jones declaration to M., who is going to England, and wants to show it to the Foreign Secretary. I don't mind, but fear that Mr. B., as far as the Jewish problem is concerned, is cemented up to the knees and can't be moved.

I went to the opening night of the Palestine Orchestra on October 16th. As a concert it was not particularly thrilling. Fitz wouldn't go because he had heard that the Orchestra would play "Hatikva"<sup>1</sup> and not "the King". Very reprehensible, of course, but hardly worth-while depriving oneself of a chance of hearing the Eroica for. *Paris vaut bien une messe*. In point of fact they played the first movements of the Eroica rather badly, though, it ended well. Barring a police officer and me, there wasn't a single Englishman in the audience, which shows how insecure life in Jerusalem is supposed to be nowadays. Taysir, my bodyguard, who is himself a policeman, got into an argument with the police, and I had to rescue him.

On the 18th the G's, who live at Tel Aviv, came to luncheon. They had spent the summer holiday in Switzerland, and had sailed from Genoa on the new Jewish passenger ship, the *Ked-mah*, which had arrived in that port ten days late and took no less than ten days getting from there to Haifa. They actually ran on a reef just outside Rhodes and had to be tugged off. By the time they reached Haifa the food and water were both exhausted—and so were the passengers.

*October 28th*

I did a broadcast last night in the series "Round the book-shops", and finished with a margin of fifteen seconds in my favour.

*November 2nd*

The spread of cholera in Egypt has caused a good deal of apprehension in Palestine, and the papers are full of letters ask-

<sup>1</sup> "Hatikva"—"the Hope"—is the Jewish National Anthem; it has a gloomy but impressive air. Irreverent British soldiers used to sing it to the words of "Baa, baa black sheep".



ing what we are doing to guard against an epidemic here, and why the town is so dirty and insanitary. As a matter of fact, for a town in the Orient, Jerusalem is remarkably clean, and it could be brought up to a decent Western level if (a) the inhabitants, and especially the poorer Arabs and Oriental Jews, were rather more civilised, (b) the police were less preoccupied with questions of security and (c) the magistrates who try municipal contraventions were quicker workers and less addicted to clemency. As it is, the town is full of unlicensed hawkers, who pay small fines for the privilege of following a lucrative profession, and squatters, usually fellah women, who sell their vegetables in the streets because they have no market to go to. It is a real misfortune that the Corporation should have chosen such an unpromising site for the Arab market. It is a long way outside the Jaffa Gate: it is unfenced and unroofed, and nobody thinks of using it. There will be a special discussion on the subject of cholera precautions at the next meeting of the Commission. Pollock has promised to come, and also Dr. Lester, Director of Medical Services, and Hadingham of the Police, and we hope to obtain more co-operation between the Municipality and the different services concerned. We shall not get very far unless we can create new magistrates from our own ranks—for instance, myself and the District officers. This would mean some extra work, but if each of us sat one day a week, we could get through a lot of business.

Last Saturday we had the first concert of the Chamber Music Society with three quartets by the New Jerusalem String Quartette. The whole *ensemble* was excellent, and they have obviously been working very hard. I hear they rehearse every day—*O si sic omnes!* They played a very beautiful Mozart quartet, a theme and variations by Rawsthorne and a Brahms quartet. The Rawsthorne in that company was like a zebra at a horse-show, but I have listened to plenty of modern music with less pleasure. Afterwards we went round to have a drink with Fitzgerald. Ken Nicholl, over from Cyprus, was staying with him. He says the “illegals” have made living very expensive in the island, as their welfare people buy everything that is to be had in the shops, and anything left over commands a fancy price.

*November 15th*

There has been a bad recrudescence of terrorism during the last few days, and new restrictions are being imposed. Some



terrorists were surprised in a house at Raanana the other day and five were killed, including three girls, in the shooting that followed. Since then there have been reprisals. Several policemen, two soldiers and four civilians belonging to the oil companies have been killed in Jerusalem and Haifa, and a lot of soldiers wounded in the Ritz Café in Jerusalem, into which bombs were thrown. There has also been a lot of shooting at night, with the usual nil results. The tone of the Jewish Press is becoming more hostile, partly owing to support for Zionism at Lake Success and partly because of the Bevin policy, culminating in the refusal to help in carrying out any decision taken by UNO which is not agreed to by both Arabs and Jews. This means for practical purposes that we shall boycott any policy decided on.

I understand from the Chief Secretary that when we are ready to go, which may be in six months' time, we shall terminate the appointments of all Government officials, British and Palestinian. I have no idea what will be done in regard to pensions. Unless the municipalities and local councils throughout the country are prepared to take over most of the functions of Government, there will be a vacuum, and God knows what will happen. McGeagh, the Commissioner for Local Government, has been told to prepare a scheme for devolution from central to local government, and I hope that will include a plan for governing Jerusalem through the municipality till the UNO government is set up. But how can we govern with a commission which, barring myself, will be *ipso facto* dissolved by the disbandment of the officials who compose it? In my opinion it will be essential for H.E. to make a great effort to persuade Jews and Arabs to collaborate in a nominated council until municipal elections can be held. Otherwise there will be chaos. Nobody will pay rates, and we shall be unable to pay the staff and maintain normal services. I calculate we can complete a new register of electors which will be based on the rate-payers' register, now being brought up-to-date, by next May or June, and hold elections then. We should certainly be ready to do so.

I greatly hope that under the new dispensation we shall be able to set up municipal shops to keep down the cost of living and that price control will be really enforced. Up to now our food and price controls have been ineffective and extravagant.

Our meeting to discuss anti-cholera measures was not a great success, though it released a certain number of fresh ideas. The

Municipality was harshly criticised by the District Commissioner, who knows perfectly well that the restrictions imposed by Government on our borrowing and spending make it impossible for us to put a stop to the unhygienic sale of foodstuffs, which could only be done by the establishment of properly equipped markets. I had hoped that he might consent to allow his District Officers to sit as magistrates and try municipal contraventions, but he is afraid of hurting the feelings of the judiciary, and won't. At present the special magistrate detailed to try municipal cases on two days in the week works very slowly and cases are accumulating fast. His ideas about deterrent fines are also unhelpful.

A member of the Commission had reported that quantities of vegetables were being grown on land manured by the outflow of untreated sewage in the Wady Sawahra and were, of course, being sold in the city. This appeared to be news to the Director of Medical Services, who will take whatever action is possible. If cholera starts here it will be necessary to forbid all cultivation in this area and to treat the sewage in such a manner that it will destroy the vegetation with which it comes in contact. I believe Dr. Lester is running a very fine quarantine service and that there has not yet been a single suspected case of cholera in this country. There have been several thousand deaths in Egypt, mostly among the poor, and a very few cases in Syria.

### *November 17th*

After some very nice rain we have gone back to sunny weather and we have to water the gardens again. I don't suppose we shall have any flowers in our private garden before the new year, but Admoni thinks we shall have plenty in the spring. Mohammed, the little gardener he recommended to me, is fairly diligent and always smiling. He calls snapdragon "angirinum" or, in Arabic, *khanag es samak*.

Hebrew lessons are going on fairly well, but, of course, at my age, with two lessons a week and no talking in the interval, one cannot make much progress. I am writing legibly now and reading more easily, but I find the verbs hellish. If the prospect were more attractive, I should think of going to a Kibbutz<sup>1</sup> for a week, but the Kibbutzers are like people who have "got religion", and are prone to stun their guests with propaganda.

During the past fortnight I have visited most of the ecclesiasti-

<sup>1</sup> Kibbutz = a Jewish communal agricultural settlement.

cal dignitaries, including the Vicar of the Latin Patriarch (Monsignor Jallad), the Custos Terrae Sanctae (Monsignor Guri—an Italian), the Vicar of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch (Archbishop Athenagoras), the Armenian Patriarch—a most learned and agreeable man, who has spent long years in India—the Greek Catholic Patriarch and the Supreme Moslem Council, of which Amin Bey Abdel Hadi is the Chairman. There still remain the two Rabbis, the Abyssinians and the Copts. Conversation with the ecclesiastics has been in French, English and Arabic interspersed with Greek, which I cannot speak, but understand slightly. I was conducted by the Treasurer to the Catholics and by the Municipal Advocate to the Orthodox. The Chief Clerk will have to take me to the Rabbis.

. . . . .

The other day I had a visit from two Transjordan Arabs from Kerak belonging to Arab ez Zureigat—Sheikh Salameh and another. They announced themselves as friends of mine, but in fact were complete strangers. However, we had a very cordial talk, and they expressed the warmest friendship for England and particular devotion to Mr. Churchill. Sheikh Salameh claimed to have worked with T. E. Lawrence, and was interested to hear that I had known him. The two men gave me the impression of being typical Bedouins, and I was astonished to hear from Saba Eff Said that they were Orthodox Christians and had come to Jerusalem in the hope of being nominated by the Patriarch as administrators of the Church property in Kerak. They were anxious to undertake this responsibility without any remuneration or prospect of gain, on account of the enhanced social position it would give them.

. . . . .

On Thursday last we listened in to the wedding festivities in London. I enjoyed hearing the Abbey service, particularly the anthem "Blessed be the God and Father" with the solo "Love one another with a pure heart fervently", which Arthur Love-day used to sing so well some fifty-three years ago at Haileybury. I found myself remembering the tunes very well over the bridge of years. The crowd made a tremendous din in the streets, and there was obviously the utmost enthusiasm. In the evening we went to a big dinner at Government House to celebrate the event.

Two days afterwards Clarissa and I dined at Hesse's with

Alex Clifford and our niece Jenny Nicholson, with Geoffrey Hoare and Claire Hollingworth as the other guests, representing respectively the *Daily Mail*, the *Weekly Dispatch*, the *News Chronicle* and the *News of the World*. Everyone had a lot to say, and as the aggregate knowledge of international affairs added up to something considerable (and the dinner was excellent), we passed a stimulating evening. Afterwards Guy Cox<sup>1</sup> came to our table and held forth on the internal politics of the Press-room at the Public Information Office.

*November 24th*

I had a talk this morning on political prospects with Park, Safieh, Saba and Wahbé, one of the two Assistant City Engineers. Wahbé, who is going to England in the spring with a British Council Scholarship to study asphalt—of all interesting things—is very much exercised about the Jewish State. He says that the large population of Arabs who will be included in it will mainly be producing crops—citrus and cereals—on which the rest of the Arab population live now and will need to live in the future. He expects that the Jews will refuse to allow them to export. The Arab State as established in the UNSCOP programme can hardly support itself within the boundaries assigned to it, and so this problem becomes a vital one. If the Arabs believe their State will be starved they will certainly fight to retain their status in the whole of Palestine. Wahbé, who is an Arab but speaks Russian like a native, said that a Russian-speaking Jewish bricklayer employed by Solel Boneh<sup>2</sup> had told him recently that he was getting £3 5s. for an eight-hour day. A Jewish contractor told Wahbé that he used to give his bricklayers beer to induce them to finish their work properly. So unless Jewish labour is prepared to pipe down, I cannot believe that the new Jewish State will be able to support itself, and if the Arab State is denied the produce of the Arabs living in the Jewish State they will also be unable to carry on.

The senior officials of the Municipality have asked to be regraded on the lines recommended in the Mills scheme for first-

<sup>1</sup> Squadron-Leader Guy Cox, a promising young journalist and an excellent linguist, who was killed a few months later in a motor accident on the Jaffa Road.

<sup>2</sup> Solel Boneh, a branch of the Histadruth (General Federation of Jewish Labour) which specialises in construction of all kinds, including road-building.

division Civil Servants. As their qualifications are usually not quite so high as in Government service, and as they are not liable to be uprooted and forced to live in new places, they do not perhaps deserve equal remuneration with Government officials, but I should be in favour of granting them substantial improvements, as their present scales are too low. It may be that financial prospects for the first year after the British evacuation will be so bad that we shall not be justified in granting increases. My own bet is that we shall grant them and next summer be forced either to reduce salaries or cut down staff.

The inability of the Municipality with its present finances to make any progress in road construction, public buildings, gardens, markets and such-like, is getting on my nerves, as it did on my predecessor's. It is evident that markets and public buildings, which should include a town hall, a theatre and a concert-hall, could be put up only if a large loan were raised, but with even £50,000 to spare we could carry out a road-building programme on a substantial scale, and with £100,000 we could proceed with road-making indefinitely. According to the law, we can collect the cost of the roads from the frontagers, but not until the work is done. At present we haven't got the money to pay the contractor while the work is going on, and consequently we cannot start. With £50,000 we could pay out and recover and go on building all the time, at any rate, short roads. Longer roads, such as the one proposed from Katamon to Bakaa, would be beyond the scope of such a limited capital.

On November 26th I went to a lecture at the Middle East Society by Abdel Latif Tibawi Eff, a Government Inspector of Education, on "A Historical Sketch of Arab Education". Professor L. A. Mayer, the Director of the School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University, was in the chair, and made a couple of pleasing speechlets. Tibawi read an excellent paper, full of information and very objective in tone. He stopped at the moment when the Arab Empire was overrun by the Turks, which was, for him, the end of Arab education till it was revived in Egypt in the nineteenth and Syria in the twentieth centuries.

I had not fully realised how very liberal and adventurous the Arabs were in the sphere of education. Some of their rulers in the Middle Ages discouraged scientists, but, according to Tibawi, the Arabs persecuted their astronomers and physicists much less than did Holy Church.



The lecturer referred to the Prophet as having been illiterate, but Professor Mayer told me afterwards that the expression *Er-rasul el ummi* was probably wrongly interpreted to mean illiterate. Mohammed is known to have had a secretary, and is likely to have learned how to read and write from him.

On Saturday, November 29th, Clarissa and I lunched with the P's in their nice house in Abyssinian Street, where they have a truly beautiful and interesting Kazak carpet—a museum piece. “Maroushka” had not enjoyed the U.S.A. much, and would not live there for however much money.

In the evening there was a large international party at the Krstichs' to celebrate the Yugoslav national day. I found myself in a group of French speakers, and the subject of conversation was restaurants. It was agreed that the food at a certain house with a reputation was not outstanding, but at least one got enough to eat. I ventured to say, “*Evidemment après tant d'années de jeûne la quantité est devenue une qualité*”. Mrs. Goldie Myerson (a prominent Jewish politician and labour leader) was there. She looked terribly excited over the prospect of the UNO verdict, which was expected during the night.

In the evening a friend whose opinions I greatly respect spoke in a very discouraged manner about the attitude of Britain towards Palestine. H.M.G. and the British public were obviously determined to have nothing to do with settling the fortunes of the country. They had become, mainly through the fault of the Jews, anti-semitic, and had abandoned the idea of assisting not only a possible Jewish State, but also the National Home. He thought there was nothing to be done about it.

I feel that in politics, as in life generally, it is no use being “fed up”. Things are changing, and one should never lose one's hold on a situation as a result of fatigue or boredom. If we keep our eyes open and are properly represented in Palestine, we shall be able to re-establish our prestige here, though at first it will be uphill work. However, I expect that the composition of the UNO Commission,<sup>1</sup> which has already been designated, will help us to do that.

The news of the UNO verdict came out over the air during the course of the night of November 29th–30th, and was followed by great rejoicings among the Jews all over Palestine, which continued without interruption till late on Sunday night.

<sup>1</sup> The UNO Commission for Palestine was to consist of a Dane, a Filipino, a Bolivian, and a Panamanian.



## THE MAYOR'S LOG (CONTINUED)

*December**December 2nd*

This morning we had demonstrations which reminded me of Cairo twenty-eight years ago. The Arab Higher Committee had ordered a three days' protest strike, which was strictly observed. The demonstrations, without which political strikes are no fun, started harmlessly with a small crowd, mainly consisting of youths and street boys, trailing up the Jaffa Road. Their numbers gradually increased, and they soon started breaking into Jewish shops and setting them on fire. Some of the shops which were burnt out were Arab, and were either set alight by mistake or caught fire from their neighbours. One of the Jewish shops was situated in the basement of the municipal building. For a long time the police did not interfere with this little mob, which could have been dispersed not with a "whiff of grape-shot" but with a swish of canes, and it was heartbreaking to see these young hooligans being given a free hand to destroy the products of man's labour at a time when we are short of everything. I remonstrated with the police, of whom there were a fair number in Allenby Square. They told me that they had orders not to interfere till they were reinforced. If they had fired a few shots at the beginning, even over the heads of the mob, or gone into them with their staves, the crowd would have melted away. In our neighbourhood it was not until a policeman had been struck in the face by a brick that a shot was fired at all. The apathy of the police gave the impression of approval. It was distressing to see my shoemaker's shop plundered and then burnt. What was interesting, though beastly, was that the street boys who pillaged the shop obviously had orders not to take the goods away, as they tore the shoes to pieces or cut holes in them with knives and iron stakes. It was organised hatred with a vengeance.

The effect of this unchecked lawlessness was to spread "despondency and alarm" among the Jewish personnel of the Municipality, who asked to be escorted home as soon as possible. The women were got away before noon in police vehicles, and the men left shortly after, with the exception of Messrs. Leibo-

vitch and Berger, who remained till the normal closing hour. I told the Jews not to return the next day, pending the establishment of better security precautions.

*December 3rd*

Roy, the O.C. Fire Brigade, came to see me in the morning. He and his men had been working like Trojans for twenty-four hours putting out fires, but they were very disheartened at the attitude of the police, who in many cases had refused to interfere with the hooligans, who cut the hose-pipes with impunity. Moreover, police and Army cars drove over the pipes and the couplings without noticing or caring what they were doing. I went round to the Commercial Centre, where the damage had been the worst, and also had a look at the Rex Cinema, which had been set on fire by Yemenite ruffians and completely gutted. The Fire Brigade had succeeded in saving the "Studio" next door, and Roy said he had had a lot of help from the Haganá during operations. The Yemenite Jews had started by setting fire to Arab cars outside the "Aeroplane" garage behind the "Rex". The terrorists who set fire to the "Rex" may have regretted their hastiness when they learned that the owner of 60 per cent of the shares in the cinema was a Jew. But do incendiaries and smashers ever regret their misdeeds?

The next few days were largely taken up with endeavours to improve the security situation sufficiently to persuade the Jewish staff that it was safe to return to duty; the municipal building being situated in an Arab area, one appreciates the reluctance of the Jews to come to the office without guarantees of protection. We were informed that a patrol would be on duty between the Arab bus terminus and the Municipality every day from 7.30 to 8 a.m. and from 1.30 to 2 p.m.—the hours for coming and going. A few members of the Jewish staff returning on December 4th failed to notice the patrol. They also complained that there were no Jewish constables on duty in the Municipality, and declared that they were not safe even in their offices. Next day none of them came except the Water Manager and Mr. Berger, the Assistant City Engineer, both of whom attended regularly throughout this period, so I went with Park to the Vaad Hakehillah and interviewed members of the Jewish Community Council, together with some representatives of the staff, who insisted, before they returned, on conditions which could not be promised. The police undertook to send me a Jew-

ish constable, and accordingly a fair number of Jewish personnel reappeared on December 7th. However, as the constable failed to materialise, there was no attendance for the next few days.

During all this period work has been badly interfered with. One typist only has been available, and the City Engineer's work has been crippled by absenteeism.

Owing to difficulties with the Fire Brigade staff, half of whom are Jewish, it has been decided to split the Brigade into two parts. The Jewish firemen will be detached and stationed somewhere in town, and the Arabs will remain at the station on the Bethlehem Road.

#### *December 7th*

An excellent site for a new fire station was found at the Health Department's H.Q., which belongs to the Municipality, but the Director of Medical Services, who is also encountering difficulties with his staff—the Arabs in his case—refused his consent. It was finally decided to station the Jewish section of the Brigade at the English Girls' College in Rehavia, which had been handed over to the Jewish Community Council to house persons who have left their homes on account of growing insecurity. The section remains under the command of Mr. Roy, and a telephone line is being laid connecting the school with the central fire station.

#### *December 8th*

To-day I had occasion to drive along the Jaffa Road and Ben Yehuda Street to the Jewish Agency. In Zion Square my car, which contained Taysir and myself, besides the driver, was heavily stoned and halted by a large crowd. I saw several persons I knew in the street, so I got out in order to make myself known, and if possible to persuade the Haganá guards to see us through. This they did very willingly, but as soon as we got going the stone-throwing recommenced, and a short distance up Ben Yehuda Street some rascal had a shot at us, and hit the car above the door. Taysir immediately fired a couple of shots from his revolver at the shooter, of whom he said he had a very good view. Luckily he hit nobody, and luckily also we were just clear of the mob when the incident happened. We drove on to the Jewish Agency, and I reported the incident. It appears that the attack on my car was due to the fact that the crowd in the Jaffa Road had been inflamed by the sight of a Jew, who had been

stabbed at the Jaffa Gate, being carried through them to a clinic. They recognised Mohammed and Taysir for Arabs—I heard them shouting “Aravim”—and didn’t care who the passenger was. I think I ought to write to Austins to compliment them on their glass, as none of the windows or the windscreen was broken, though they had several direct hits from heavy rocks.

When I got home at 1.45 a police officer called to get particulars of the incident, which we discussed over a gin-and-french. We had both had a harassing morning, and needed something to tone up the “moral”.<sup>1</sup> I mentioned that I had seen an armoured police car standing in Zion Square while the stone-throwing was going on. It looked and behaved like a drowsy elephant, and took not the slightest interest in the proceedings.

#### *December 9th*

The prevailing insecurity is beginning to affect the municipal services. There is a curfew from six in the evening till six in the morning, which interferes with the early arrival of slaughterers and butchers at the abattoir. Moreover, Jews take a considerable risk in going there, and we have consequently been obliged to permit the slaughter of their cattle at a rather unsuitable place in the Nebi Samuel quarter. Scavenging, which was interrupted when the civil war began, is now proceeding normally.

#### *December 10th–15th*

The problem of absenteeism among the Jewish staff continues to cause much anxiety and inconvenience, and I have had almost daily discussions with the Jewish Community Council and the police. My view is that as Jewish Government officials and the employees of Barclay’s Bank have resumed work there is no reason why the municipal employees should continue to absent themselves. When I threatened to treat them as absent without leave if they did not return to duty by a certain date, Messrs. Eliashar, Schwarz and Thon, representing the Community Council, protested that conditions were not the same for our people as for the others, as Government offices did not admit unidentified persons, Barclay’s Bank was strongly protected inside by the police, the Arabs in the neighbourhood of the Palace Hotel, where there are several Government departments, are mainly Christians, and so on. They added that they were personally responsible for the non-attendance of my Jewish staff,

<sup>1</sup> Englishmen recently adopted this French word, but invariably spell it wrong. “Morale” means something quite different in French.

as they would be responsible for compensating their families if they were killed, and appealed to me to refrain from punitive measures until security precautions were adequate. They then made a practical proposal to the effect that two Arabs and two Jews belonging to the municipal police should be armed and placed on guard inside the municipal building. I took up this proposal and, after having recourse to the Chief Secretary, succeeded in obtaining warrants as special constables and arms for the four men. During these discussions Mr. Eliashar warned me that "Arab terrorists" infiltrated into the Municipality from time to time and frequented the canteen. I made a careful investigation of this statement, and found no evidence to show it was true.

The Jewish Community are obviously doing everything in their power to force us to open a branch office in the Jewish part of the town. This would be most inconvenient, and would be interpreted by the Arabs as the first step towards "partition" in the city. I shall certainly resist this pressure, unless it is demonstrated beyond a doubt that attendance of the Jews at the present office is definitely dangerous.

#### *December 12th*

A powerful explosion was heard about noon, caused by a bomb rolled out of a taxi by Jewish terrorists into the crowd at the Damascus Gate and exploded by gunfire. It seems that there were many casualties, to judge from the number of wounded who passed the Municipality in ambulances within ten minutes of the explosion. A British constable was killed while trying to protect a Jew unconnected with the outrage from the mob. You may say what you like, a British policeman in Jerusalem to-day has the nastiest job in the world.

#### *December 15th*

The period since December 2nd has been marked by a series of incidents and outrages. These were certainly begun by the Arabs, and the Jews have retaliated in kind, with the result that about 200 people have been killed and perhaps 400 injured in Palestine in the last twelve days. The numbers of dead on both sides must be fairly equal, and in addition eight or ten British have lost their lives.

A few days ago the High Commissioner made an appeal for peace, and at the same time issued a warning which will have to



be put into force to be believed. We have refused, and repeated our refusal more than once through the Colonial Secretary, to implement the UNO decision to set up a Jewish State in Palestine. At the same time we are pledged until the end of the Mandate to keep order. Are the two policies compatible? At the present moment the rank and file of the police, and probably of the Army, are somewhat naturally in favour of the Arabs, and there is, and will be, more than a little reluctance on the part of our men to do anything to help the people, who have been shooting and bombing them for the last four years. That is how the constables and soldiers seem to be feeling, but if public order is really to be preserved they must carry out their instructions, whatever they are. The question of discrimination will probably solve itself before long, if the Arab gunmen go on shooting our policemen. The enemies of their enemies will not necessarily remain their friends. In the meantime the British troops and police have a definite bias against the Jews. Over-simplification leads them to identify the whole community with the sins of a small and embarrassing minority, and I can't help feeling that the senior officers in the police should make more efforts to point out the fallacy.

*A propos* of what I have written, I was told by a senior Government officer who had just returned from Nazareth that he was held up by crowds at Jenin, but not molested—he was wearing a tarboush for safety. There he saw Arabs distributing tommy-guns to the people under the eyes of British policemen who were standing around.

On the night of December 13th, 1947, Arabs stole four hundred rifles and a number of Bren and Sten guns from a police arms depot at Ramleh. No police casualties were reported. The robbers were intercepted by military units while driving away, and some of their loot was recovered, including all the Brens and Stens.

Jews living in Arab quarters are beginning to be very nervous, and are asking for facilities to transfer themselves to Rehavia and other Jewish regions. Even the Jews in Talbiyeh, who normally live alongside the Arabs in very neighbourly fashion, are alarmed.

I called on the Herbert Lewins after dinner the other night and we had a long talk. They were depressed, and said that the situation of the Jews everywhere is bad, and that the world



seems unwilling to give them relief to receive them anywhere. If Lewin, who is a dentist, could get a visa for New Zealand he couldn't practise his profession, at which he is an ace, without taking a course lasting three years and passing an examination. I have advised them to leave Bakaa, where they are now living, and they seem ready to do so. They told me that Dr. Freund was threatened with death by the I.Z.L.,<sup>1</sup> which accounts for his sudden departure for the United States. He also has to re-qualify there as a doctor.

*December 16th*

Staff all present. A letter addressed to the *Palestine Post* criticising the Fire Brigade very severely and unfairly was forwarded for my comments. I have received tributes from the public to the good work done by the Fire Brigade during the past fortnight, and Mr. Eliashar has promised to record his impressions of what he saw in the Commercial Centre.

The Treasurer informed me that Dr. Khalidi, secretary-general of the Arab Higher Committee, had rung up to enquire if the rumour that I had given orders that persons wearing Arab dress were not to be admitted to the municipal building was true. I explained to Dr. Khalidi that the rumour was not only untrue, but was a grotesque invention which no one who knew me could believe. Dr. Khalidi said that two or three persons had told him of the rumour, and he had to find out if it was true. Having heard what I had to say, he said he would deny it. It was alleged that I had instructed a Sudanese municipal guard to keep Arabs out. My instructions had been that nobody of any description, Jew or Arab or what not, who had no business in the Municipality should be admitted after 1 p.m.

Dr. Davis of the Hadassan hospital has been complaining daily of lack of water. The Water Manager now says he can let the hospital have an average of 90 m. daily, which should be enough.

I understand that Jewish officials in the Palace Hotel will not go back to work as long as the guards are Arab Legionaries,<sup>2</sup> and the same situation has arisen in the Broadcasting Offices.

<sup>1</sup> I.Z.L. = Irgun Zvai Leumi = "the National military organization", the more important of the two terrorist armies.

<sup>2</sup> Strong detachments of the Arab Legion had been borrowed by the Palestine Government from Transjordan for security duties. They remained in Palestine until just before the expiry of the Mandate.

*December 18th*

No Jewish staff present for duty, except of course Leibovitch and subsequently Berger. The others seem to have absented themselves for a variety of reasons:

(a) The body of a Jew was found in a sack in Silwan village. The victim, an old man, is said to have set out from Mea Shearim for the Municipality. Mr. Matalon says that he actually arrived and paid in 240 mils due for rates. Subsequently, according to the statement of two municipal employees who witnessed the incident, he was accosted by two Arabs outside the building, bundled into a car and driven away. Why did the witnesses not report at once?

(b) The Jewish staff employed by Government in the Palace Hotel building left their work, and on their way up Princess Mary Avenue met one of our engineers and told him that they had been ordered to leave their offices. By whom?

(c) Word came that Jewish employees had been forbidden by their "institutions" to come to work. Mr. Eliashar denies this.

(d) An individual called Rosenblatt, writing to the *Palestine Post*, complained that the Municipality was dangerous, and called for the establishment of a Jewish office in the town.

The neighbourhood of the Municipality has been quiet, but an idiot Arab with a green arm-band has been annoying passers-by by stopping them in the street, feeling in their pockets and looking at their papers. The man is an ex-serviceman. He is known to be unbalanced, and I cannot think why the police do not stop him.

*December 19th*

No Jewish employees at work except Leibovitch and Berenbaum, who now seems to regard himself as the intermediary between me and his colleagues.

I understand that unless the road from the O.B.G. shop to the Municipality is patrolled continuously between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m. it will be difficult to restore the confidence of the Jewish personnel.

The Palace Hotel officials are all back at work, but not those belonging to the Accountant-General's office or the Department of Labour. I had a meeting this morning with the Accountant-General and the Superintendent of Police, at which Mr. Melamede was present to represent the views of the Jewish personnel. There is no doubt that the Jewish employees believe

there is real danger, and are not satisfied with a patrol which moves up and down and inevitably has its back turned on most of the people on the pavement most of the time—or perhaps it would be more logical to say half the time.

We urged the Superintendent of Police to have the patrol stationed with their backs to the Municipal garden, in a sangar if possible, while a couple of men could patrol to the right and a couple to the left. The central group would thus be able to see the whole of the street at the same time and, equally important, would be seen and recognised as a patrol by the passers-by.

The Superintendent of Police promised to consider this proposal seriously, but I gather he will have to get the consent of the security committee to whatever he does, which sounds nonsensical. He also promised to stop the molestation of passers-by by Arab "special constables", or whatever these armed men call themselves.

#### *December 20th*

I saw no signs of a patrol between O.B.G. and the Municipality.

No incidents.

#### *December 21st*

The Jewish staff, men only, turned up at the office to-day. They reported that the road leading to the Municipality was not being patrolled when they came in. I was in the office for about an hour (to-day being Sunday), and passed twice up and down this stretch, and made the same observation. Soon after noon the Jews began to leave, and I believe that by 12.45 they had all gone. This caused nervousness among the Moslem personnel, who professed to fear that their colleagues might have left a bomb behind them. This adds a new complication, and one with which we may have to reckon in the future.

#### *December 22nd*

By this time I had become weary of trying to persuade the Jews in the Municipality to come back to work, whether by endeavouring to improve the security arrangements or by chiding the staff for their faint-heartedness. I accordingly wrote a letter to Mrs. Goldie Myerson, who is for the moment acting as Chair-man of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, explaining my difficulties and asking her to use her influence to induce my Jewish

officials to do their duty. It is humiliating to be obliged to have recourse to a community authority for assistance in maintaining discipline, but Government can do nothing and the staff won't heed threats or listen to reason.<sup>1</sup>

The Municipal Commission met at 4 p.m. in my house. I reported the continued absenteeism of the Jewish staff, and the Commission discussed the security situation with a view to finding out whether there was real justification for the Jews staying away. Bergman told the story of a telephone message which had been sent to a Jew by an Arab friend saying that it would be dangerous to go to the Municipality, and more in that strain. Finally he put the question to Jamal Bey Toukan, "Do you seriously and sincerely think it safe for the Jewish municipal employees to go to the office?" And Jamal Bey said, after reflection, that he seriously and sincerely thought it was. It was agreed that we could not go on paying the staff a retaining fee for belonging to the Municipality.

I reported that I had written to Mrs. Myerson, and said I hoped to see good results the next day.

#### *December 23rd*

I found in the morning that no Jews except Leibovitch and Berger had come, and asked the D.C. to get the police to put their security precautions into operation. He said that I had made it impossible to get any more assistance from the police because I had spoken to policemen and suggested that the "static patrol" should take up its position as had been agreed. I should have thought that the situation was much too grave for such tiresome formalism, but contact with officialdom in a small country teaches one a lot of new things.

Finally I decided to go with Berger to the Histadruth, and after a long and animated but not unfriendly discussion with Messrs. Schreiberman and Nemirowsky of the Histadruth and the staff committee we came to an arrangement which was accepted by all parties. The text of my communication to the staff was as follows:

#### *Details of Security Arrangements*

Mr. Graves calls upon all the Municipal Officials to return to duty. He is convinced that the security measures now to be enforced are adequate to protect the staff from attacks.

<sup>1</sup> Subsequent events justified the officials' contention that the road leading to the Municipality was unsafe.

These measures are:

(1) The police and Military patrol will patrol Jaffa Road from the O.B.G. to the Municipality throughout the period of municipal office hours, viz. from 7.30 to 2.30.

(2) Two Jewish special constables will meet the staff at the Anglo-Palestine Bank at 7.45 and escort them to the Municipality. At two o'clock the two special constables will escort the staff to the barrier in front of the District Commissioner's offices.

(3) The police should refrain from searching any municipal officials who produce their cards of identity.

(4) Members of the public are at present liable to search by the police. The Police Authorities to be requested to order that searching should be applied indiscriminately to members of all communities.

(5) Assurances have been given to the Chairman by the Superintendent of Police that no civilian will be permitted to interfere with passers-by or summon them to produce passes or search them.

(6) Officials employed on outside work shall not be obliged to come to the Municipality on days on which they are employed on outside jobs. To avoid waste of time, these officials shall attend the office until sufficient outside work has accumulated to fill a working day. Heads of Departments must supervise these arrangements.

(7) Special arrangements will be made for women members of the staff to be driven to the office either in private cars or in a municipal car, if no private cars are available.

Mr. Schreiberman had tried to persuade me to say that I would be personally responsible for the safety of the staff if they returned to work. I pointed out that though the request was in a sense flattering, I had too much respect for the meaning of words to agree to it.

*December 24th*

To-day the Jewish employees were all at work. I called a meeting at 12.30, from which I excused the Water Manager, who had not missed a day, and explained to the staff how much harm their absence was doing to the town.

I invited them to show some spirit, and to make it clear that they were not inferior in courage and conscientiousness to Government officers, and added that in future absentees would lose their pay and render themselves liable to dismissal.



I now hope that absenteeism will cease, but do not feel too confident because (a) the staff contains a certain number of rabbits and (b) the temper of the Arabs is rising and a recrudescence of disorder is not unlikely.

I hope that the police are now prepared to do their duty as professional men, without thinking of their grievances against the I.Z.L. and the Sternists, and, by extension, against the Jewish community. There was a significant letter from a British constable in the *Palestine Post* to-day, in which the writer said the Jews had started with plenty of British good-will, but had lost it all as a result of the terrorist outrages. This sentiment is perfectly intelligible, but if it tempts a policeman to fail in his professional duty he should resign.

We have had a very long drought, and I have continually been exasperated by the radio announcer saying that the morning would be cloudy, but in the afternoon the weather would improve. The only improvement in the weather would be a downpour of rain. Finally we had about an inch of rain spread over two days, and now we have picture-postcard blue again. However, with rain and snow in most parts of Europe, I expect we shall get our share here. The great thing is that the wind should blow from the west and that this wretched Sharqia should lay off.

On the 18th H.E. opened the new Sports Clubhouse and made a good speech in a ringing voice. It is certainly an act of faith to put up a new British Clubhouse at "*minuit moins cinq*". It is clear that they will have to make an international affair of it on the lines of the Ghezireh Club, and will have to admit plenty of Jews and Arabs, as well as getting the diplomatists and the UNO people to join. The new house is very comfortable, with a magnificent lounge and bar and a suitable approach and car-park. Sir Alan couldn't help alluding to the Phoenix, and wondered if the former committee had set the old building on fire with the project of the new one in their minds.

On Christmas Day Clarissa and I went to church at St. George's. We had the three best Christmas hymns, and I took occasion to copy out the words of "the Breastplate of St. Patrick", the most striking poem in the hymn-book. It was



translated from the Irish of the Saint by Mrs. Alexander, who was unmistakably a poet. I remember her when I was a child, and also her husband, the Archbishop of Armagh, a very fat, pleasing and saintly man, who enjoyed the approval of my grandfather, which was hard to earn. I have not heard the tune of the Breastplate, but it can't be as good as the words. It would be interesting to know if Mrs. Alexander knew Irish, or if she did her translation from a translation, as my father used to do. The rest of the day was spent in seasonable festivities, and, considering the political atmosphere, there seemed to be a lot of personal good-will in the air.

### *Boxing Day.*

"David Courtney's" article in Column One of the *Palestine Post* to-day was frankly pro-Communist. His views must often be irritating to Agronsky, the editor, who is far from being a Communist, but I suppose the paper must think it worth while to employ an Englishman who is a Zionist and who has a certain gift for expressing himself. What I find curious is that, with all his sentimentality about the hardships of the "common man", Courtney will not realise that the "common man", as well as the uncommon man, has a harder time in the Communist State than under any capitalist government. I have no doubt that there is far more freedom in Spain than in Yugoslavia. Meantime "Courtney" continues to grouse and grumble at the world on five mornings in the week.

In the afternoon I went to see Gurney, the Chief Secretary, meaning at the same time to call on Lady Gurney. Sir Henry was in, and we had a very agreeable talk. He had been at a "prep" school at Copthorne with my young brothers, Robert and Charles, and remembers my father going down to the school and giving a talk. I believe he is a good classical scholar, and I know he has been a scratch golfer. I don't know what Secretaries of State or Heads of the Civil Service think about having all-rounders in high positions. Personally I am all in favour of them, though many big men, such as Kitchener, run faster in blinkers.

We talked for a while about law and order and the difficulty of maintaining them, and wondered why the public in the streets, on the country roads, and on the railways were getting

so little protection. Trains were being looted almost daily, but it did not seem beyond human ingenuity to prevent it.

Mrs. Myerson had a narrow escape to-day driving down to Jaffa. Her car was holed in several places, and the head of the Migration Department of the Jewish Agency was killed in one of the other cars.

We are now beginning to have a censorship on the radio news, and soon shall not know what is going on in Palestine. The idea is that if news of reprisals and retaliations is not made public the occasions for them will decrease. I think this pious hope will be disappointed, as news leaks out and spreads around no matter how you try to check it; and unofficial news is more apt to be exaggerated than official.

In the early afternoon I had been up on the golf-course, and had won my match without recourse to the arts expounded in "Potter on Gamesmanship", which somebody sent me for a Christmas present.

The weather was perfect—for golf, if not for the cisterns of Jerusalem—with a light wind and a clear sky. The full moon swam up through a sea of amethyst in the east, where the colours are always best in these climes if the sunset is cloudless. It is when there are clouds about that we get fine sunsets in the west, but when all is clear there is no evening glow worth mentioning.

During the night there was another big train robbery, in which many sacks of mail were stolen.

*December 28th (Sunday)*

Jewish staff all present.

*December 29th*

As the Jewish staff were walking from the O.B.G. corner to the Municipality a bomb was thrown at them by a man in Arab dress standing at the corner of the lane which runs down to the Arab bus station. The bomb seems to have been a grenade. Three members of the staff were hit by fragments, all slightly, but Mr. Rembach, a clerk in Barclay's Bank, received a fatal head-wound, and died in the afternoon. Levy, the Jewish

constable with the party, asserted that he saw, in all, four Arabs in the lane. He fired one shot in the air, and subsequently fired at the Arabs, one of whom fired at him with a pistol. Allowing for the usual discrepancies and the fallibility of human beings in recording their experiences, the evidence was singularly unanimous, particularly clear and interesting testimony having been given by Mr. Boury and Special Constable Levy. The latter behaved very well, and followed up the aggressors and, with the help of the police, arrested two, but neither of them was the bomb-thrower. I took down the story as told by seven or eight members of the staff, and walked over to Police Headquarters to find out if they wanted any supplementary information. This was welcomed by Mr. Bourne, who took over my papers with a promise to return them. He had arrived on the scene within a very few minutes of the attack, and said he had no doubt that the evidence given by Levy and the other members of the staff was true. He also realised that the attack had been planned, and that the inhabitants of the street and the shopkeepers had been forewarned, as practically all the shops were shut and there were no vehicles on the street. I cannot understand why the police did not realise this in advance and take the necessary precautions. With the information that the most elementary intelligence officer could have gleaned they could have prevented the attack, or at least captured or shot the culprits.

Most of the Jewish staff left before one o'clock, and there seems little hope of ever getting them back to this building.

I called on Dr. Lester in the evening, and found him with Dr. Krikorian. He said he would do his best to find our staff accommodation in the Public Health Department Headquarters, but would not promise anything. He was greatly upset by the murder of Dr. Lehrs and Dr. Maalouf, and worried by the absence of the Jewish staff from the Government Hospital.

Dr. Hugo Lehrs was a member of the permanent staff of the Government Hospital. He was doing a job at the hospital at Beit Safafa when several armed Arabs came in and shot him dead at point-blank range. Lehrs had many British patients and was well liked. In reprisal for his death, Jews have murdered Dr. Maalouf, a well-known and much-respected Arab doctor. In addition, a Jewish nurse has been killed in a bus on the way to the Hadassah Hospital.

It is said, I don't know with what truth, that the "authorities"

on both sides have ordered that doctors and nurses are not to be attacked.

Another good life lost was that of Robert Stern, an Anglo-Jewish journalist, who was shot near the Public Information Office. I met him some weeks ago at a dinner-party. He had been attached to the Press department of our Embassy at Moscow during the war. At his burial Arabs fired at the funeral party, who had to take cover behind the tombstones. A day or two later, at the funeral of a British constable, another B.C. was killed by Arab snipers.

*December 30th*

The Arab staff were worried because the single member of the Jewish staff (except of course Leibovitch) who always comes to the office—namely Mrs. Brown—had turned up wearing a veil “like a Moslem woman”. They professed to fear that she might have disguised herself for some evil purpose. I did my best to reassure them.

I went early, with the City Engineer, to the P.H.D. Headquarters in Mahne Yehuda, where Dr. Krikorian had said we might have the whole top floor for our Jewish office. There I found Dr. Coke and some of his staff, for whom the Government Hospital is apparently untenable, staking a claim to the rooms we wanted. We were just in time to prevent them from getting in.

The accommodation consists of fourteen rooms, and is just about sufficient for the staff. One of the Eliashars came with us, and lent us a sort of Kavass belonging to the Jewish Community Council, in case any terrorists were about.

When we returned we found the Arab officials in a state of excitement because the Jews had been separated from them. They seemed to think that the creation of a sub-office was the first step towards partition and setting up a Jewish Municipality. Park and I did our best to reassure them, but it was not easy. We finally decided to have the necessary office furniture sent along without getting the senior Jewish officials to come down and say what they wanted, which might have provoked incidents.

There is great tension and nervousness, and a small incident might cause a lot of trouble. There may still be difficulties about

transporting the furniture. Park told the cantonniers that if, by refusing to shift the furniture, they made it impossible for the Jewish office to work, our revenue would cease and there would be no pay for anybody. This argument is a good one, and not too far-fetched. It was made clear to the Arab staff that the Jewish seniors would not exercise authority over them, as they would practically never come to this office. When they came here they would come to take instructions from myself, Park or the Treasurer.

*December 31st*

The year is dying in a murk of gloom, disorder and hatred. It will give way to 1948, the centenary of the year of the Communist Manifesto, but I doubt if any poet of to-day feels inspired to write a new version of "Songs before Sunrise".

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MAYOR'S LOG (CONTINUED)

*January 1948*

*January 1st and 2nd*

Nothing to report except that a meeting was held to discuss the transfer of the Jerusalem water supply from the Public Works Department to the Municipality. We have agreed to operate the pumping-stations and pipelines as agents of the Government until March 31st. We shall continue to pay Government for the water, and they will continue to provide the cost of the staff and maintenance.

*January 3rd*

Practically all the furniture has been safely transported to the Branch Office, but now the Jewish employees complain that they have not got their glass-topped desks!

. . . . .

In order to allay the fears of the municipal officers I have been toying with the idea of trying to get some kind of assurance from the terrorists that they will leave our staff and our buildings alone, seeing that we have no political affiliations and are nothing more or less than agents of the citizens of Jerusalem. If our building were blown up, municipal services would be interrupted, and might cease altogether. During a discussion with the Jewish Community Council on the new arrangements for the Jewish staff I raised this point, and asked them if they could convey a message to the terrorists in the desired sense. They immediately replied that they had no contact whatever with any terrorists, and could make none. That, of course, is the Jewish official attitude. In the case of members of the Vaad it probably represents the truth.

They suggested that it would be in the interest of our safety in the municipal building if they published in the Jewish papers a statement to the effect that the Municipality now provided an office for the Jewish staff in a Jewish area and were carrying out their duties in the interest of all the citizens. We should therefore be left to work in peace, and any attack on us would be an attack on the people of Jerusalem. I thanked them for the



suggestion, but left it to them to carry it out or not as they felt inclined.

During the night there was a lot of shooting, apparently in the German Colony.

One of the most atrocious incidents in the last few days is reported from Haifa, where Jewish terrorists threw a bomb into a crowd of Arabs waiting for work outside the gate of the Consolidated Refineries. About a dozen people were killed and forty injured. The Arab workers of the Refineries then set about the Jews in the workshops and killed about fifty without the use of firearms, injuring a good many others. Police and troops did not arrive until the slaughter had been going on for a considerable time.

As a reprisal the Haganá, two days later, attacked the village of Balad el Sheikh, where a good many Arab workers live, killing seventeen and wounding over thirty. I cannot think it is good policy for the Haganá to take revenge for reprisals, however frightful, that have followed an outrage by the I.Z.L. or the Stern Gang. The Jewish authorities have been at great pains to dissociate themselves from the terrorists, so why should the Haganá fight their battles?

#### *January 4th*

A very high wind was blowing this morning and knocking our trees about. We ought to get heavy rain when it drops, and whatever the radio says I shall say that the weather has improved.

#### *January 5th and 6th*

My forecast has been more than fulfilled.

There was a little rain before lunch, and it grew heavier and heavier. By tea-time it was falling in cataracts. The courtyard in our house was flooded a foot deep, but Clarissa waded into the pool and removed a grating full of leaves which were blocking the outflow from the gutter into our underground cistern. I walked to the club through a deluge. At 7 p.m. the lights went out, and did not come on again for fourteen hours. Katamon and the Greek and German colonies were plunged in darkness throughout the night, and lightning was the principal

illumination. I never heard a louder thunderclap than one which shook the house about 4 a.m.

Meantime the terrorists had got busy and blown up the Semiramis Hotel in Katamon with some sixteen people in it, including the Spanish Consul, a young man of about thirty, who had fought through the Civil War. He bore the resounding name of Don Manuel Allen de Salazar y Travesedo. In the morning we drove up to the Semiramis before going to the office and had a few words with the Spanish Consul-General, who was very much affected by the tragedy. Most of the victims were Christian Arabs, and there were a number of children among them.

Similar outrages were perpetrated in Jaffa yesterday, and many persons were killed and wounded, including four Franciscan monks.

It seems to me now that the I.Z.L. and the Stern Gang are so completely out of hand and so powerful that UNO would be justified in telling the Agency that there will be no question of an independent Jewish State as long as the tail wags the dog.

Knowing the tenets of the Irgun as we do, we can be pretty sure that they would not consent to sit still in a truncated state, as they would call it. I doubt now whether partition would work. I never thought it a good solution, but hoped it might be found feasible. Now it is difficult to see how it can succeed, and equally difficult to see how a substitute can be found for it so long as the U.K. refuses to go on with the Mandate.

If the two communities are left to fight it out with partisans on both sides, the Arabs should win in the long run on numerical superiority, but better organisation and better technical equipment might give victory to the Jews, who are, moreover, prepared for greater sacrifices than are the Arabs.

Arriving at the office, I found the Arabs in a state of great excitement and nervousness, and full of suggestions for the defence of the building, which they expect to be blown up at any moment. I applied to the police for advice, and they sent me a young officer, who made what seemed like a pretty good scheme. I have now asked for Arab Legionaries as guards.

As almost all the typists have moved to the Branch Office, I have enlisted Clarissa, whose pupils have largely melted away on account of the general insecurity. She is a good typist, and

not at all gun-shy, and her example will hearten waverers. She will share an office with Miss Lolas,<sup>1</sup> a descendant of Crusaders, who has also got plenty of spirit. I expect this feminine buttress to be useful if times get worse.

In the afternoon I went to tea at Government House. No one else was there except Sir Alan and his immediate staff. H.E. was very friendly, and obviously interested in the fate of the Municipality and of the British staff. He seems to realise that a time will come when we shall have to decide if our position is tenable or not. He is anxious that a Governor should be appointed to Jerusalem as soon as possible, but does not want the UNO Commission to come to Palestine until the eleventh hour. This is the viewpoint of H.M.G., but whether it is inspired from Palestine or not I don't know. It is based on considerations of prestige and on the idea that there must not be two kings in Brentford. My belief is that if the Commission arrived a couple of months before the evacuation they would not seek to usurp the functions of Government. Their rôle would be firstly to inform themselves of what is going on, and secondly to evolve, in conjunction with the Government, plans for the transfer of authority and the maintenance of security against the day of our departure. It would not be necessary to give any orders at all. Perhaps, however, the High Commissioner is also preoccupied with the difficulty of guarding the members of the Commission against attack. This might easily present a problem in view of the uncompromising attitude of the Arabs towards the decisions of UNO.

### *January 12th*

We have passed a depressing week since my last entry. Hardly an hour has gone by in which it was not possible to hear the discharge of firearms.

On the 7th in the afternoon there was a very serious bomb outrage, when terrorists dressed in police uniform stole a police armoured car, drove down to the Jaffa Gate, threw a bomb into a canteen, and drove back through the Mamillah Road, firing as they went. When they reached the cemetery corner on their return journey they stopped the car and threw another bomb, which killed the granite-faced constable who directed

<sup>1</sup> Miss Lolas was killed in the Old City during the fighting in June.

the traffic from the island. This rugged, picturesque man was a friendly feature of the landscape, and his murder seems to aggravate the crime. After killing him the criminals climbed over into the cemetery and ran for it. Three out of five were killed by the police firing from the roof of the General building, and one was wounded.

Driving back from the District Commissioner's office, where we had been holding a meeting of the Municipal Commission, we passed the abandoned armoured car, which was afterwards burnt by the Arabs. The bomb at the Jaffa Gate killed twenty and wounded forty persons, and was a typical terrorist exploit compounded of courage, brutality, and technical efficiency.

Next day I learnt that Wahbé<sup>1</sup> and his family had had a narrow escape and that their car had been riddled with bullets from the stolen car.

About this time Stakleff's flour-mill at Beit Safafa was blown up by the Haganá and the debris set on fire with incendiary bombs. British troops went to put the blaze out, and were fired on by Arabs, eight men being wounded. They returned the fire and killed three brothers. Possibly the Arabs mistook the British for Jews in our uniform.

Among stories current are the following:—

(a) Four British constables at Nablus stole two police armoured cars and deserted to the Arabs. This was published in the *Palestine Post* as a quotation from *Falastin*.<sup>2</sup>

(b) Dr. Maalouf, supposed to have been murdered by Jews in retaliation for the death of Dr. Lehrs, was really killed by Arabs because he had refused to contribute several thousand pounds to the national cause (*Palestine Post*—January 13th). This sounds absolutely phoney.

(c) At the funeral of the Spanish Consul the verger noticed two nuns come in wearing nylon stockings. Thinking these inappropriate, he told a priest, who communicated with the C.I.D., and at the end of the service the nuns were whisked off to Police Headquarters.

Generally speaking, the stockings of nuns are invisible. Possibly on going up the steps into the church these nuns lifted their skirts high enough to give a view of the nylons. Judgment suspended.

I went with Mr. Safieh to the funeral of the Consul on

<sup>1</sup> Vladimir Wahbé, Arab Assistant City Engineer.

<sup>2</sup> *Falastin*, an Arab daily.

January 9th. There was a large congregation at the Solemn Mass at St. Sauveur's Church.

It is now known that the destruction of the Semiramis Hotel was the work of the Haganá. The *Palestine Post* said that the hotel was used as an office for concerting military operations. This is the sort of alibi invariably given when public opinion has been shocked by an outrage. It gives no semblance of an excuse for murdering families as they slept. At a later date I told Leo Kohn at the Agency what I thought about this atrocity. He said that he had not slept for two nights after it, and added that several Haganá people had been dismissed in consequence.

The recent exploits of the Jews have greatly alarmed my Arab staff. Since we have set up a branch office for the Jews on account of their fear of the Arabs (justified by the event), the Arab employees, abandoned by their colleagues, now anticipate being blown up by the Jews. There is some ground for their apprehension and, as things are at present, with insufficient security precautions, it would be child's play for a bunch of Irgun boys to blow us to smithereens. The scheme of defence for the municipal building, prepared by a police officer, which I mentioned in a previous entry was turned down flat.

The Chief Secretary, to whom I then had recourse, managed to get us a guard of Arab Legionaries, whom one can depend on to keep their eyes open. Their appearance is a great consolation to the staff.

During the morning of January 12th I went with the City Engineer and Wahbé to the Church of the Tomb of the Virgin near Gethsemane, which had been flooded during the storm on the night of January 5th. We found the District Engineer of the P.W.D. at work, as well as a section of Sappers, who were still engaged in pumping out the church, which had been almost completely filled with rain-water. Much damage had been caused. A rubble wall flanking the courtyard had collapsed and admitted a torrent of water, which rushed down the long flight of steps into the church. There must have been something like thirty feet of water in the church, and I suppose the altars, church furniture, and relics were spoiled. The R.Es. had done a good job of work. Two of them had been nearly asphyxiated in the process by fumes from the pumping-engine. Messrs. Park and Wahbé are establishing the exact



cause of the inundation, and the City Engineer will be reporting. It seems that this church was similarly flooded 150 years ago. It is quite a relief, these days, to hear of an incident in which no lives were lost.

*January 13th*

Antony Rock, a British subject employed in the P.W.D., came to see me this morning dressed as an Arab.

He suggested that the Municipality might make temporary improvements in the only road now available for Arabs wanting to get into Jerusalem from Malha and Ain Karem. Arabs cannot use Gaza Road, which runs through Rehavia, nor can they adventure into Romema. The work suggested by the appropriately named Rock would extend over a stony stretch of about half a mile, leading into Katamon. I said we had no money, but would do the work if the Arabs would bear the cost.

*January 14th*

Public insecurity interferes with all branches of human activity, or nearly. We are at present having difficulty in conveying to his destination an erector sent out to us by Messrs. Harland, who are supplying new plant for our water-supply stations. He is now at Tel Aviv, and will eventually have to instal a Diesel engine at Bab el Wad, where quarters have been prepared for him in the pumping-station. For the moment there is difficulty about escorting him through. It is obviously better for him to get to know the water-supply officials and the other English erector who is at Ras el Ain before going into solitary and dangerous confinement. Anyhow, it is no use sending him to Bab el Wad until the new Diesel engine, now in Haifa, has been delivered.<sup>1</sup>

*January 15th*

There was a horrid murder in the German Colony this morning, when John Berry, a Hirings officer, was killed with his wife opposite the pension Lendholt at eight o'clock "by a swarthy Arab", as a witness said. Mrs. Berry was the daughter of Mr. Shitreet, the Chief Magistrate of Tel Aviv, who is very well spoken of. The Berrys were on the point of moving out of the Colony.

<sup>1</sup> Both the erectors, Messrs. Gemmell and Oates, got away safely in April after finishing a substantial part of their work.



January 16th

A battle has been going on for the last two days at Kfar Etsion near the Hebron Road, where what is described as a large Arab force has been trying to overwhelm a couple of Jewish colonies. British forces have been standing by. During this engagement an R.A.F. reconnaissance pilot reported that he had been attacked by Jewish light aeroplanes. The Jews deny this, and according to the radio no arms were found in the Jewish planes. I hear that our authorities are thinking of telling the Jews to keep all their planes grounded when R.A.F. planes are in the air, or take the consequences. If our pilot's story is correct, this action would be appropriate. How intensely stupid even to fly near a British war-plane at such a moment !

In the evening I went to Government House and had a talk with Troutbeck, head of the Minister of State's office in Cairo. He did not take in bad part my criticism of F.O. policy in this country, though I couldn't expect him to agree with me at such short notice. We discussed various subjects, and the question arose whether the Municipality would be constitutionally in a position to carry on after the surrender of the Mandate and the departure of the Administration.

Sir Alan came in at this point, and said that he was studying a draft from "the lawyers" which seemed to cover this point, and in which it was ruled that the laws and ordinances hitherto obtaining would remain operative until amended or abrogated by the future Government. That means that the Municipal Corporation's Ordinance will continue to be valid. Still, I don't see how it will be possible to operate it legally without a commission or council appointed or elected to take the place of the present commission, which will certainly melt away when the administration packs up. Anyhow, it is satisfactory to know that the laws of Palestine will not *ipso facto* become null and void on our departure.

There is plenty of grass on the golf course, but casual shooting often interferes with play. The other day while riding in the neighbourhood of the fourth hole, near the Arab College, Major Andronovitch, the American liaison-officer, had his horse shot under him.

The details of the revision of salaries of municipal officials were decided at a special meeting of the Commission on January 16th.

Most of my proposals were left intact, but the scales of three grades were increased to a lesser degree than had been proposed. I don't think the scales now decided on will entail any hardship, and if, on some happy day, the City State comes into being, I expect that, in view of their greater responsibilities, heads of departments will be awarded higher salaries.

But will there be any money to pay salaries in six months' time?

*January 17th*

On this morning's radio it was announced that Sir A. Cadogan (made by the announcer to rhyme with slogan) had given the figures of casualties in Palestine since November 30th as British 103, Arabs 1,050 and Jews 750. These figures do not include heavy Arab losses at Haifa yesterday nor considerable casualties on both sides during the recent battle at Kfar Etsion.

Philip wrote the other day wondering, unemotionally, who was going to win this war and thinking that the Jews had a better chance than the Crusaders for the curious reason that they are not a one class or a one and a half class community as the crusading lords and their men-at-arms were. He added that they knew the country well and that many of them can pass as Arabs. I understand the latter argument but not the former.

Yesterday I had a letter from Robert <sup>1</sup> in Majorca. He also had some views about the Palestine problem which certainly show the trend of his thoughts these days. He says:—

"As to partition it goes clean against scripture. The Jews are entitled to Judah, Benjamin and the Negev and no more.

"The Arabs, who are not from Arabia—but infiltrated from the deserts of east and south, as sons of Abraham and circumcised are entitled to hold all that the Ten Tribes forfeited at the first captivity, though they should also admit Jews. Their claim, through Ishmael and Lot, is stronger than Judah's through Jacob everywhere but in the south. There are fifteen

<sup>1</sup> Philip Graves and Robert Graves, brothers of the author.

relevant texts in the Torah but nobody at UNO has read them. The Arabs forfeited their sovereign rights to the Turks, from whom we won them and turned them over to the League of Nations."

I should like to send the above quotation simultaneously to Falastin and the *Palestine Post* and see what their readers made of it. Personally I can't help thinking that continuous residence for 1,300 years gives the Arabs a strong settlers' claim to the country, which is set off, less convincingly, by the historic occupation by the Jews of much of Palestine, plus the facts that the world owes them a great deal and that the Balfour Declaration, though not explicitly foreshadowing a Jewish State, created something, the national home, which could be expected to develop into a State.

Three or four years ago Robert wrote to me saying that the Arab claim to Palestine was legally more valid than the Jewish—this was, I think, before he had begun to study the Old Testament texts on the subject—but added that the urge of the Jews to go to Palestine was as irresistible as that of the lemmings to plunge into the northern ocean.

Robert is becoming more and more of an expert on mythology and magic. He has just finished "The White Goddess", which is about "the historic grammar of mythology". He kindly, but, I suspect, inaccurately, says, "You will be able to read it, but few others." He says it answers many outstanding riddles, such as "Who cleft the Devil's foot? What songs did the Sirens sing? What name did Achilles assume when he hid himself among the women? What secret was tied in the Gordian knot?" I am certainly looking forward to this treatise and wondering how far it will be taken seriously.

After tremendous difficulties our friends the B's have found a house in Talbiyeh. One of the tragic features of the present time is the displacement of families from one quarter to another. Many Jews in the German Colony, Katamon and Bakaa, driven out by well-grounded fear of being murdered, have moved into Rehavia, sometimes abandoning their household goods for fear of drawing attention to the fact that they were moving. Others have gone to Talbiyeh, where there are plenty of Arabs and a good number of Jews, while most of the few Arabs living in Rehavia have left their houses. In Talbiyeh the

B's are not likely to be molested. Old "Auntie", the Ibsenish crone who lives with them, has fallen off a chair and broken her leg, which puts the lid on Mrs. B's discomfort. Auntie is always saying "*Ich hätte schon längst begraben werden sollen*", which is no more than the truth. Perhaps she will have a chance of slipping off to Paradise now.<sup>1</sup>

Clarissa wrote a sort of manifesto the other day calling for peace in the Holy Land, to which I contributed a few sentences. It would appeal to good-hearted, decent people, but is not calculated to impress or subdue the boiling fanatics who teem in both communities. No Jews would sign it because it recommends that immigrants should be selected for trustworthiness and self-control. This is not at all the idea of the Agency, which wants numbers and considers that Zionist aspirations should be the only criterion for admission. She has sent it to Norman Bentwich for an opinion.

#### *January 18th*

Mohammed, my chauffeur, seems to have rendered valuable assistance in dismantling a car-battery connected with a number of sticks of gelignite in a taxi driven by a Yemenite Jew and left at the Jaffa Gate. The driver, who had an Arab identity card and spoke Arabic perfectly, was getting away on foot, when a passing Arab called to him, "Hullo, Menahem, what are you doing here?" The car was immediately searched for explosives, and Menahem was lynched.

#### *January 19th*

I called on the Egyptian Consul-General, Ahmed Mohammed Farrag Bey, and we talked politics for an hour or so. He is a very intelligent and agreeable man, and carries on the tradition of his predecessor, Mahmoud Fauzy Bey, an outstandingly good diplomatist who is now on the Egyptian delegation to UNO. Farrag Bey seemed confident that when it came to military operations with well-armed Arab soldiers the latter would "wipe" the Jews, the Arabs being fighting men and the Jews men of peace. I did not contest this theory, for obvious reasons, but apart from Ibrahim's victories over poor Turkish troops and the temporary successes of the Wahabis in their

<sup>1</sup> She did.

desert campaigns, I don't think the Arabs have a distinguished military record during the past few centuries.

Farrag Bey was much interested in the future of Jerusalem, and was shocked to hear me say that it would probably be impossible to carry on the municipal services for more than two or three months, and we might expect famine, drought and pestilence in the city.

He expressed the opinion that the Arab League might support the creation of an International City-State, provided that representation in the Government and the Municipality was equally shared in spite of the disparity in the population. As a matter of fact, according to the map published in the *Palestine Post* to-day, which puts Ain Karim, Malha, Abu Dis, Beit Jala and Bethlehem within the boundary, the respective Arab and Jewish populations may turn out to be about equal. I absolutely agree with the view that there should be equality in representation. For my part I feel somewhat sceptical about the Arab League being ready to accept the International State of Jerusalem, as its creation is one of the concomitants of partition which they have sworn to oppose. I am glad to have painted a sombre picture of the future of Jerusalem if hostilities continue. Nobody wants to live in a town given over to battle, murder and sudden death, and consuls suffer more than most people when they lose security, mobility and comfort. Farrag Bey will pass my forecast on to his colleagues, which is all to the good.

Next day I told Fox-Strangways about the Egyptian Consul-General's interest in the question of representation in the City State. He was not sure if the proportions had been exactly established, but said that there had been talk of 45 per cent Jews, 45 per cent Arabs and 10 per cent others. If "others" include Armenians and Greeks, the Arabs will have a voting majority, as the Armenians at least will always vote with them.

The next thing is to find out what the Jewish politicians think. Fox-Strangways supposed that Shertok would already have expressed the Agency's views at Lake Success, but did not know what they were, nor did he think that it was feasible to ask the Agency at this end. I shall try to get an expression of opinion out of Mrs. Myerson or Ben Gurion. The point is that if the Arab League will agree to recognise the City State, it will be to their interest to bring pressure to bear on the Arabs and



the Jews to put a stop to hostilities in the town and neighbourhood.

An international city which had been largely destroyed by civil warfare would need a long time and much money to recover, and the violence of those who destroyed it would survive in the form of a perpetual vendetta between the two communities.

*January 25th*

On the 20th, Hilton, who is coming back to the Commission, came to see me and asked me what I thought of the idea of creating a municipal police force. I said that in principle the idea was a good one, because the City State would have to have police, who might just as well belong to the Municipality. He said there was a scheme to create a force consisting of 600 officers and men, half Arab and half Jewish, with a British Assistant Superintendent in charge. I asked him who was going to pay for it, as the Municipality had no money at all. He said Government would provide equipment and pay half the cost of running it, and the Municipality the other half. I said that was quite impossible, as we were in such a condition that it might be difficult to pay normal salaries before long. We could only pay our share if we were given new sources of revenue and were able to collect. Hilton then went away, leaving me with the impression that I would be approached officially and invited to sound the Commission and then collaborate in the preparation of a scheme.

Next day the radio announced that Government had decided to form a municipal police force for Jerusalem of the strength indicated by Hilton, to be paid for half by Government and half by the Municipality. As an old Civil Servant, who likes to see public business conducted according to Cocker, I was shocked at the capricious and unconstitutional manner in which the scheme had been sprung on the public and the Municipality. I duly made my protest, and received some kind of laboured apology from the authority responsible for the announcement, who said he thought I had been officially consulted and would be notified in writing at once of the details of the scheme. Up to now I have received no letter. However, since the announcement was made public I have been making some enquiries regarding the probable cost of a police force of 600 men, and obtained some useful figures from Mr. Krikorian,



the Paymaster of the Palestine Police Force, a man of great experience and a very loyal and efficient servant of the Crown. He told me that a normal and normally equipped force would cost something like £300,000 a year with the present cost-of-living allowances, which makes our share £150,000. Done on a very cheap and nasty scale, our share might be reduced to £90,000 a year, or £7,500 a month, which would be doubled or, more likely, trebled when the police evacuated Jerusalem next May. Anyhow, we are not in a position to pay even £2,000 a month more at present, and I cannot see the citizens agreeing to pay a security rate of about 15 per cent just now.

During my visit I congratulated Krikorian on having received an honorary O.B.E. He then said there was something wrong about the announcement in the *Gazette*, as he was a British subject, and entitled to a "straight" O.B.E. I advised him strongly to get a correction made, as a decoration for a British subject is more meritorious than for foreigners, many of whom—I do not refer to Palestinians—deserve their honours no more than did the recipients of the Garter in former days. *A propos* it amuses me to remember that some ten years ago I was created a Commander of the Austrian Order of Merit for services which I have never been able to identify. Before I had had time to request His Majesty's permission to wear this attractive white cross, Hitler marched into Vienna and the "situation no longer arose".

The news from UNO is most unsatisfactory. There is no likelihood that an international force will be sent to implement partition, which means that the contestants who are supposed to have had their cause settled in a court of law will be left to fight it out.

The failure of UNO to validate its decision and the immorality of the U.S.A., who lobbied their way into securing a two-thirds majority for partition and now refuse to do anything practical to enforce it, are comparable with the defeatist attitude of Britain. In fact, they are almost worse. We made it quite clear when we first announced our surrender of the Mandate that we were not going to help to enforce any decision not accepted by both sides. That is in appearance the attitude of a neutral, but transformed into practice it causes us definitely to hinder the enforcement of partition.

Still, there was a sort of frankness about the manner in which we resigned our responsibilities in Palestine, and neither UNO nor the U.S.A. nor the Arabs nor the Jews have any right to think that we mean any more or any less than we said.

I heard a B.B.C. broadcaster talk about the sub-continent again yesterday. Will that stale *cliché* describing a fair-sized peninsula, not much bigger than Arabia or Greenland, never become obsolete?

There have recently been cases of mutilation of Jewish dead, and horrible photos of stripped and disfigured corpses have been on sale near the Y.M.C.A. I believe the obscene vendors of these horrors have now been chased away. Leonard Woolf says somewhere that it is a pity that so many human beings are gorillas at heart: he could not have said a truer word.

### *January 26th*

I was in the branch office this morning, and propose to go there on three mornings every week; otherwise I can have no contact with the Jewish community, except by the telephone, as it is not safe for Jews to come to our head office.

I found work progressing normally, but there seems to be a good deal of discontent, because we have been obliged to give notice to a number of temporary officials, whose work is not important enough to justify their salaries.

Mr. Kantor, a Government veterinary officer, came to me with a proposal to convert some calf-pens in the grounds of the branch office, hitherto used for housing calves, whose lymph was used for vaccine, into kennels for stray dogs and dogs suspected of rabies. The alterations will cost almost nothing, and as the P.D.S.A.<sup>1</sup> kennels are no longer being used owing to their dangerous situation, I see no reason to reject the proposal.

It is disquieting to see that some of the Government services are already beginning to disintegrate. It is certainly a sign of the times if the Health Department are no longer making vaccine against smallpox. No doubt ordinary bacteriological work will be discontinued before long. The anti-malaria squads are unable to function in several areas, and their usefulness is imperilled if they cannot operate everywhere, for a single source

<sup>1</sup> People's dispensary for sick animals.

in which the anopheles can breed may be enough to infect the whole town.

I have been reading "Pioneer to the Past", being the life of James Breasted by his son Charles, which is very well done and is a suitable memorial to a great man. I was much interested in the full and vivid account of the events leading up to and following the discovery of the Tut-ankh-amon tomb. It recalled a happy month which I spent at Luxor just before and after the official opening of the tomb, at which I had the good luck to be present. My principal duty at the time was to supervise public security in the provinces of Qena and Aswan, in anticipation of some uprising. In fact nothing whatever happened to disturb the peace and the holiday atmosphere of those famous playgrounds, and I had a wonderful opportunity of watching that sensational archæological imbroglio from behind the scenes.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MAYOR'S LOG (CONTINUED)

*February*

*February 1st*

There has been no general improvement in the atmosphere since last I wrote. There have been a few engagements of a minor sort between the Arabs and the Haganá, a few murders and woundings, mainly by Arabs, and a few bomb outrages by Jews, most of which were not accompanied by much loss of life. Almost every night there is one heavy explosion at least. Part of Shahin's beautiful apartment house on the top of Katamon went up the other night with a tremendous roar. One of the wings was being used by Arab snipers. I was disgusted to hear of this, for there was no better built or more attractive construction among the new houses of Jerusalem. The Local Town-planning Commission condoned an irregularity in it on account of its general architectural excellence. A day or two afterwards I met Shahin's brother on the steps going down to the Mamillah Road and commiserated with him. He said he was prepared to make greater sacrifices for the cause, but I am not sure that he is a partner in his brother's concerns.

Last night there was a loud explosion in Mekor Haim and another in town this morning, followed by the siren. Clarissa thinks the siren, which has become almost obsolete since the outbreak of the civil war, is only blown after attacks against the Security Forces, but I think that is just an idea. Two British constables were shot dead to-day in Ben Yehuda Street, which is a most unwholesome thoroughfare.

The Municipal Police Force project has not made much progress and I have not yet received a word about the matter in writing from Government. However, there has been a little progress, and the question was discussed cursorily by the Commission at its last meeting. I have been asked to get in touch with the community authorities responsible for the maintenance of the Haganá and the Arab National Guards and to enquire if they will be prepared to contribute to a municipal force and, if so, how much.

I have received the draft of an amended Municipal Corporation's Ordinance, which I have passed on to the Municipal Advocate for his comments. It contains some provisions for transition to a new dispensation and extension of the powers of the Commission (or Council), when we get back to normal.

Another important question which has been put up to me by Government is that of the purchase by the Municipality of the water-supply plant outside Jerusalem. The figures contained in the document accompanying the D.C.'s letter are somewhat obscure, but it seems that we may be able to acquire the water supply, pipe-line, pumping-stations, buildings, machinery and land for about £300,000, which is less than I had guessed. We should, of course, have to borrow the money, but could pay back the loan in twenty years without discomfort. A consideration which is not dealt with by Government is the interest in the springs at Ras el Ain already possessed by the owners of the Rutenberg concession. It is important that we should be able to secure for Jerusalem our maximum foreseeable requirements of water. Tel Aviv does not at present draw on the Ras el Ain water nor do Petah Tikvah and Ramat Gan, but if their local springs ever failed they might need to do so. Luckily the total output of Ras el Ain is more than sufficient to meet the needs of all these places put together.

The latest news of our £60,000 loan is that it has been formally approved by the Executive Council. The next thing to find out is whether Barclay's are still willing to lend the money. I saw the Director on Saturday, and shall know to-morrow whether the money will be forthcoming or not. If I were in his shoes, I should think twice about lending money to any institution or person in Jerusalem as things are at present.

To-day I received a deputation from the Vaad Hakehillah, consisting of Dr. Thon and Messrs. Ginio and Krongold, who were very anxious that the projects for Rehavia drainage and the ex-servicemen's flats should be put out to tender. Their view was that, as these schemes had been approved by Government and were needed by the population, they should not be abandoned as long as it is in any way possible to proceed with them. They thought that we should have much less difficulty in collecting the rates and taxes if the public realised that we were encouraging employment and rendering service to the community. There is something to be said for this view, though I

greatly doubt if any work could be done, as things are at present, on the site of the old Zoo—the animals have now been successfully transferred to Mount Scopus—which is constantly being shot over. There may be a change in the atmosphere before the tenders are adjudicated, though this is doubtful, and, in any case, it is good policy to proceed as far as one can at present with schemes which Government have approved and, in one instance, initiated.

My visitors went on to plead for the reinstatement of redundant Jewish employees who have received notice of discharge. I took this in bad part, and pointed out that it was unfair to the rest of the staff and to the population, at a time when we were in great financial straits, to pay people for doing nothing. It was suggested that the Jewish community were so interested in these four or five employees that they would refrain from paying rates if they were not reinstated. I took a very poor view of this argument, and did not conceal it from the deputation.

Katie Antonius came to luncheon the other day. She has only lately returned from looking after her father<sup>1</sup> in Egypt, and is greatly shocked by the general demoralisation here. She says Jerusalem is full of swaggering strangers with no interest in the city, who have filtered into Jerusalem on the stream of the national movement and are equally prepared to fight, murder or loot. She is not any less opposed to partition than she was, but I think that she feels that the Arab national effort is being besmirched by so much meaningless violence. She and de Bunsen were our two guests. It was curious that three members of the party had a father or mother alive at ninety or more, viz. Father de Bunsen, aged ninety; Mother Graves (Clarissa's mother), aged ninety, and Dr. Nimr, aged ninety-three. De Bunsen is the Director of Education, and is much liked and appreciated in this country. He only came to Palestine in 1946, but he has been here long enough to acquire a real interest in the problems of education, which have a greater urgency for the Arabs than for the Jews, who have practically no illiterates. I suppose that, like the rest of us, he can only hope that the suc-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Faris Nimr, who with the late Dr. Sarruf founded the Moqattam and the Moktataf in the middle "seventies" and who might be called the father of Egyptian journalism.

Mrs. Antonius is the widow of the late George Antonius, author of "The Arab Awakening" and one of the protagonists of Arab nationalism in Palestine and Syria.



cessor States will not have to spend about half their revenue on security and defence and that there will be something substantial left for civilising the people.

Last Thursday Clarissa and I went to a poetry-reading evening at the British Council. Jardine (the British Council representative) read a script which gave the soloists an excuse for reading their pieces.

Altogether about twenty poems were read, all on the theme of love, and the selection was a very good one.

Some of the readers were excellent, but I was surprised to hear Marvell's poem "To his Coy Mistress" read soberly and without the slightest *accelerando* after "Till at my back". The lady would have continued to guard her long-preserved virginity if she had heard the passage so rendered.

Next night we dined with Jardine and heard some more poetry, this time from records, as well as talking local politics, about which my host's views more or less tallied with mine. We had several records by J. Gielgud, one or two by Vincent Baddeley and one by T. S. Eliot, who read his *Magi* poem. Gielgud reads about as well as Christopher Scaife, which is good enough for me, and Clarissa made the pertinent observation that actors know how to manage their breath, which is a prime factor in poetry-reading.

### *February 2nd*

The latest item in the chapter of horrors is the destruction of the *Palestine Post* offices by a bomb which did great damage to surrounding houses as well. This happened at eleven o'clock last night, and I heard the explosion as I was going to bed. None of the editorial staff was injured, but a lot of printers and compositors are said to have been hurt, some of them fatally. The staff rose to the occasion, and produced a two-page issue this morning in spite of everything.

There is a mystery about the perpetrators of the outrage. The bomb was brought up in a truck or a military lorry, as the Hebrew newspapers stated. I devoutly hope no misguided Britishers were responsible. Possibly Agronsky has offended the Stern Gang. Arabs might have done it, had they been well enough organised; but are they? I heard to-day from Berger, who has been clearing up the debris and working on the houses which look likely to collapse, that he found in the ruined truck

in which the bomb had been placed a cigarette-box with a NAAFI label on it. Of course, this proves nothing. Plenty of Arabs and Jews and Poles, as well as British, might be in possession of NAAFI cigarettes, but I expect the Jews will make propaganda out of this inconclusive detail.

I went to the Secretariat to see Fox-Strangways, who told me that the proposed composition of the Legislative Council in the New Jerusalem was eighteen Arabs, eighteen Jews and four others. He supposes that similar equality will be provided for the Municipal Council, but there is not likely to be a place for "others" on it. I passed on this information to the Egyptian Consul-General, who said he would advise his Government. The next meeting of the Arab League will be next Saturday.

*February 3rd*

I went up to-day to see the ruined offices of the *Palestine Post*, and found Hasolel Street in a terrible mess. The inside of the *Post* building had been completely gutted, but the walls and the staircase were still standing firm. An immense amount of damage had been done to the neighbouring houses, and I suppose Agronsky has lost all the books with which his fine office was lined. I saw the assistant-director of the Migdal Insurance Co. surveying the scene with a melancholy expression, although his company were only liable for £13,000. What must the other companies have lost!

The other day I went up to the Hebrew University and saw the site of the new Zoo. The accommodation is quite good and the new cages several times larger than the old ones. The garden is situated in a grove, usually called a forest in Palestine, and when all the paths are laid out and the benches placed will be ideal for picnickers.

I was recently asked if the Municipality were inclined to contribute £600 to provide a cage for a pair of Syrian bears, which I understand have been given to the Zoo by London. These animals, which formerly inhabited northern Galilee, are now extinct in Palestine and very rare in Syria. I could not oblige Dr. Schuloff with £600 or 600 piastres.

The amended Municipal Corporation's Ordinance was expounded to me to-day by Saba Eff Said. It seems quite satis-

factory, and the prospect of escaping from the thralldom of the administrative authorities is eminently cheering, though I don't suppose we members of the Commission will benefit by it. As time goes by and chaos grows, the prospect that any British municipal officials will survive into the new régime grows fainter.

The director of Barclay's will not lend us the £60,000. He offers to write to London to find out if his Board will overrule him, but I have told him not to bother.

*February 10th*

During the last week there has been a good deal of activity in connection with the Municipal Police scheme. On February 4th I went to see Dr. Hussein Khalidi, the Secretary-General of the Arab Higher Committee. His offices occupy the upper floors of the house on the main street in the German Colony, of which the ground floor used to be the Café Shahrazad. The café has now been closed, which is a pity, as it was a godsend to the residents of the Colony. However, in this age of violence it would be tempting Providence for the owners to try to keep a café going in a house which the Jewish terrorists might blow up at any moment, and for the Committee to allow a café to remain in which a customer might easily leave a bomb. Now there are armed Arab guards, got up to look like Antar,<sup>1</sup> all round the building and on the balconies, and they are making a sangar on the other side of the road. I had no difficulty in getting through to see the doctor, who told me that he was much surprised to hear that the police problem had arisen in a new form. He said that he had thought that the question of policing the Arab areas had been settled as a result of discussions which he had had with the Inspector-General of Police. He said he had heard on the radio at Beyrout of the Government's intention to establish a municipal force and had been much astonished by the news. I found Dr. Khalidi less uncompromising than I had been given to expect. As befitted an ex-Mayor, he deprecated the continuance of violence in Jerusalem. He also spoke as if the UNO Commission would really have a voice in the destinies of Jerusalem when the Mandate came to an end, though he might not have dared to express such an opinion in the presence of Hadj Amin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Antar—a legendary Arab hero, usually depicted as armed to the teeth and wearing a ferocious expression.

<sup>2</sup> The ex-Mufti, Chairman of the Arab Higher Committee.

After eventually receiving a letter from the D.C. giving a certain amount of detail regarding the proposed force, I laid the question before the Municipal Commission. The Commission recommended that Government should go ahead with the formation of the first half of the force, for which they would be financially responsible, and we should endeavour to ascertain how far we could recover the cost of the second half from the two communities.

I discussed the subject with representatives of the Jewish Community Council on February 5th. They were not opposed to the creation of a municipal force, and thought that their community would be ready to pay half the cost, provided it was clearly understood that no money contributed by them was spent on the Arab force.

On the 6th there was a meeting at the District Commissioner's house at which after I had protested against the premature publicity which had been given to a scheme about which neither I nor the Commission had been consulted, practical details regarding the creation and financing of the force were discussed and agreement was reached. Among the matters considered was whether municipal policemen could be made to produce guarantors for the safe-custody of their arms. The temptation to sell their rifles for £100 or so had already proved too much for some of them. It was stated at the meeting that Dr. Khalidi was now discredited among the Arab politicians and that he has lost all influence. I suspect him of having still some power to obstruct proposals of which he doesn't approve.

The question of the possibility of getting a financial guarantee for the safe custody of police rifles was highly topical, as during the past few weeks Palestinian policemen had got into the bad habit of selling their rifles or surrendering them without a struggle to armed irregulars. Others deserted with their rifles and ammunition and joined the bands.

The most agreeable event of the week was FitzGerald's musical party on the 8th, when the four players who took part in the Chamber Music Society's concert (barred to the British for security reasons) a week before volunteered to come and play for Fitz, the Chairman of the Society. They played an all-Mozart programme, including the "Gran Divertimento for

String Trio", which they did magnificently. Fitz asked H.E. and a number of English people reputed to enjoy music to the entertainment, and he managed to get in some Jewish friends as well. A most enjoyable evening.

On February 10th there was a regular battle in Jerusalem. Fourteen Arabs, one Jew and one British soldier were killed and about forty people wounded. Arabs came sallying from the Jaffa Gate, and managed for a short time to occupy part of Old Montefiore. British troops then went into action and threw them out. Many thousands of rounds must have been fired during the course of the day and the night, and most of the bullets found billets in the ground or in stone walls.

We were delayed by the fusillade in starting for home, and I heard of an Englishwoman who spent three hours in a shop called "the Cultivated Home" waiting for a lull. There was a rumour that the battle had been staged by the Jews to impress the insecurity of Palestine on the UNO Commission who were sitting at Lake Success, but there seems no doubt that the Arabs started the fighting. They had a score to pay, as the day before the Jews had blown up several houses, including the Tannous building in the Shama'a quarter. A number of parcels of ammonal were left lying about by the Jews, but luckily did not explode. They might have done immense damage.

We had another scavenger killed in the troubles yesterday. Very bad luck on the man and his family, and a new worry for us. It may cost us another £900, as these chaps are invariably married and have numerous children. I have found out that this man was killed by a shot deliberately fired at him from a Jewish No. 7 bus as he was connecting a cesspool evacuator with the pipe. The driver of our vehicle took shelter behind the cart, but the other man was so engrossed in what he was doing that he didn't notice the danger. I am told that these No. 7 buses frequently rush through the streets of Baka'a shooting to right and left, and that when they come in sight the inhabitants run for cover. Apart from being wicked, this is extremely stupid, as the inhabitants of Talpioth and Ramat Rahel have no other life-line than these buses connecting them with Jewish Jerusalem.

*February 11th*

This morning news came from the Old City that the Arabs were coming out to take vengeance for yesterday's reverse.

Lurid tales of their savage mood and destructive intentions reached the Municipality about eleven. Government had already arranged to evacuate the officials working in the Palace Hotel, and there seemed a chance that we should not be able to get home if we did not leave before the battle started, so at about 11.30 we knocked off. At the moment of writing—12.45—all is still quiet, and it may be that our display of force has scared the Arabs. The Jews are also said to be ready for them.

### *February 13th*

There was no battle on the 13th, no doubt because of the dispositions taken by our troops.

On the 12th there was a little shooting, and after a Haganá trooper had been killed in Talbiyeh the Jews ordered all the Arabs out of the quarter, which was a grossly high-handed action, considering that at least 90 per cent of the houses belong to Arabs and more than a quarter of the residents are still Arabs. In fact, Talbiyeh is conventionally an Arab quarter, and the Arab residents are civilised, good people, quite as respectable as their Jewish neighbours. I heard this news at the Arab club, and advised Constantine Salameh, who has been put out of his beautiful house, to ring up Government House and ask H.E. to protect the Arab population in this quarter.

The Palestine Government are still responsible for the administration of the country and for public security, and we surely ought to be able to prevent an injustice of this sort.

Between three and four this morning there was the noisiest and heaviest firing I have yet heard in Jerusalem. There were at least a dozen bomb or mortar explosions and a very "well-nourished" fire from rifles, pistols and automatic weapons of all sorts. Some of the explosions shook the house, and could not have been very far off—probably in Katamon. In spite of all this violence there was a ray of hope in the news yesterday, when a spokesman announced that the Palestine Government intended to support to the full the creation of the new Jerusalem State.

Yesterday afternoon a gramophone concert was given by the British Council, the three items being Bliss's "Phoenix March",



Dvorak's "New World" and Vaughan Williams's "Flos Campi". I arrived too late for the "Phoenix". The New World Symphony was conducted by Hamilton Harty, who, Huberman thought, was about the best conductor in the world—new or old. Anyhow, the Halle Orchestra played magnificently under him when this record was made, and their wood wind and brass were superb. One couldn't help thinking that Dvorak, with his melodic invention and richness of orchestration, made the British composer sound eccentric and uninspired.

J. must feel a certain diffidence about sponsoring musical shows and talking about the music, as he claims to be incapable of humming or singing anything in tune. It is a question whether tone-deaf people can recognise tunes. J. says that music gives him pleasure, which implies that he can discern one thing from another.

I always wonder if intellectuals who play no instrument and are never heard to whistle or sing get any emotional pleasure out of music. Some of them are regular concert-goers, and no doubt can follow the music very well from the printed page. Augustine Birrell was tone-deaf but devoted to Wagner's operas, and the Shah of Persia, who visited London in the 'eighties, enjoyed the tuning up of the orchestra beyond anything they played.

I wish the savage breasts of the people of Jerusalem were as amenable to music as mine is.

*February 17th*

I cannot get a directive from the authorities about policy in regard to the recruiting of the second 300 members of the Municipal Police Force.

There is quite a tendency on the part of responsible Arabs, in particular members of the Chamber of Commerce, to favour the idea of a Municipal Police Force. The recruitment of the first half of the Arab force has gone well, and 132 men are already on duty. The Jews are slower to come forward, probably because their pay is below their normal standards. The Arab Chamber of Commerce, with whom I had an interview on the 15th, said they would guarantee a sufficient contribution to pay the cost of half the Arab force if they were authorised to do so by the Arab Higher Committee. They seemed to think they could raise L.P.5000 a month without difficulty. They preferred a volun-

tary (or semi-voluntary) contribution to an imposed rate, which would be difficult to collect. They welcomed the idea of a community committee for police matters, which would be able to ensure that Arab contributions would be spent solely on Arabs, and which would be invited to make concrete proposals for the improvement of security.

One or two of the members of the Chamber seemed decidedly hostile, and I felt that they still resented the creation of a Commission to replace the elected council, and only parleyed with me under protest. Joseph Albina, who is very friendly on unofficial occasions, seemed rather embarrassed.

### *February 20th*

Since my last entry a meeting has been held at the Arab Higher Committee's offices at which Dr. Khalidi, Jamal Toukan, Hadingham, Hilton, Sims (a police officer) and myself were present. The upshot was that the Arab Higher Committee would support the Municipal Police Force and provide the second 150 men for the Arab contingent, but would not agree that any of the cost should be borne by the people, who, in their opinion, were overtaxed.

Dr. Khalidi spoke very strongly on the subject of the Old Montefiore (Yemin Moshe) quarter and the Jewish area of the Old City, from which he said the Haganá ought to be expelled. His view is reasonable, though it needs an effort to believe that, after all the trouble we have had, the Arabs would respect the Orthodox Jews in the Old City if their Jewish protectors were removed. At the present moment the Haganá garrison keeps hostilities going, but also keeps up supplies of food and water which reach this quarter rarely and with difficulty, and claims to be preserving the Orthodox colony from destruction.

It has now become evident that the financial situation of the Municipality is worse than precarious. There was a big decline in normal revenue in December and in January, and since the beginning of February practically no money has been coming in. Unless matters improve very considerably we may not be able to pay salaries after April 1st, and the whole machine will run down. The causes of the trouble are mainly political. They may be summed up as follows:—

- (1) Owing to insecurity and disorder there has been deterior-

ation in the municipal services, but considering all things, most of the essential services—scavenging, sweeping, street lighting and water supply—have been maintained at a reasonable level. The slaughter-house arrangements have broken down and the city abattoir is no longer being used. There is now no guarantee that meat sold to the public by Arab butchers is fit for human consumption. As a matter of fact most of it is, but without the safeguard of veterinary inspection some diseased meat is doubtless being eaten.

(2) The Arabs resent the creation of a branch office in the Jewish quarter which was forced upon us by considerations of security. They regard, or affect to regard, this as a step on the road to partition.

(3) The Jews resent the fact that the central office, where I work, is the main office, and complain that we keep the most important registers and files there, and that in consequence it takes longer than is normal to get business done through the branch office. This defect is being remedied by the transfer of certain original registers to the Branch Office, and the Municipal property ratepayers' lists have been copied and sent to the branch.

(4) Both communities feel that the Commission does not represent the citizens of Jerusalem, and they are perfectly right. On the other hand, they refused to sit down together as a representative council, and there was no choice but to set up a commission.

The ancient slogan "No taxation without representation" is beginning to be heard.

(5) The police and the law-courts are functioning at about a quarter pressure, and there is little chance of obtaining or enforcing judgments against defaulters at present.

(6) The general state of uncertainty and insecurity is such that most people prefer to hoard their money in anticipation of an emergency when their incomes will dry up. This I consider the main reason for default.

(7) A good number of houses have been demolished and many families have left the country. These have to be written off as rate-payers for the time being.

*February 24th*

The chief incident of the last few days has been a terrible outrage in Ben Yehuda Street, when several blocks were blown

up and about 180 persons killed and wounded, including, up to now, 49 dead.

The Jews have immediately assumed that Britons were responsible for the outrage, because the trucks which brought the bombs appeared to be army trucks, and the drivers escaped on a police armoured car: moreover, they were all passed as British police by the Jewish road control. On the other hand, many Arabs claim the exploit, and say that it was the work of Europeans in their service, in which there are Germans, Poles, Czechs and a few British deserters.

Government have issued a statement to the effect that it is "unbelievable" that such a crime had been committed by British servicemen. I wonder if the authorities responsible for the Government statement know what bitter feeling there is against the Jews among many British policemen and a few British soldiers. I have read poems and letters written by policemen, which would have made me chary of using the word "unbelievable" in this context.

Some members of the police force openly approve of the policy of Hitler, who, after all, tried to destroy the whole Jewish race and thought nothing of having several thousand slaughtered in a single day. If you spread five million over five years you get about three thousand a day as an average. Sympathisers with this policy might have lowered themselves to commit the Ben Yehuda Street outrage, but we may never know the truth.

I feel that a representative of the Jewish Agency should have been invited to attend the police enquiry from the start. The gesture would have been appreciated and, more than that, if no evidence is forthcoming against the police or the army, beyond the identity of the vehicles, which were probably stolen, the Jews might believe, however reluctantly, that the crime was not the work of British hands and brains. As it is they have immediately reacted in their usual manner, and have killed several of our soldiers and airmen in revenge for a crime of which Britons probably were innocent.

Clarissa and I went to the scene of the outrage on Sunday morning. We had to wait for a bit in the Jaffa Road before going up Ben Yehuda Street, and, as we sat waiting in a shop, had the painful experience of listening to a hysterical woman bemoaning the dead and cursing the wicked English. For some reason or other she refrained from cursing us. When we got to

the site of the explosion we found a terrible mess. It was said, and it proved to be true, that there were several persons still alive buried under the débris, many of whom were got out safe. One young woman, who was shown to me, professed to have recognised one of the criminals as a British policeman with whom she was acquainted, but she did not remember his name, though it was on the tip of her tongue, and she never remembered it well enough to report it to the police, as she was told to do.

We met many acquaintances milling about in the rubble, and were treated decently by everyone, but it was galling to feel that everyone believed that the men in the car and the trucks really were policemen or soldiers and to be unable to deny it positively.

I was glad to see that Berger and all the engineering staff from the branch office were at work clearing the débris and rescuing entombed victims. It will also be necessary to demolish dangerous buildings, and Berger asked that demolition should be effected if possible without explosives, which would be bound to do more damage in the neighbourhood.

Sappers had been helping with the work for the first hour or two after the explosion, but the temper of the crowd was so hostile that they withdrew before nine o'clock.

The clearance of the mess is the duty of the Municipality. It will cost a lot of money, though much of the work is being done by volunteers. I went to see Stewart, Acting Chief Secretary, after inspecting the ruins, and told him we should have to ask for assistance from Government to meet this charge. He told me to make a claim in writing. I gave him my views about the desirability of having a Jewish representative present at the enquiry. He agreed in principle, but said that no enquiry was being held, as there was no *prima facie* evidence—only an investigation. He thought that the Jews should be “in on” that, and believed that the High Commissioner was already considering the point.

It seems that I do not know the meaning of “*prima facie* evidence”. The vehicles in which the explosives were brought to the scene of the crime were army trucks, and the armoured car in which the drivers escaped was, to all appearance, a police car. The occupants of the car had satisfied the Haganá road check that they were British policemen. If all these things don't fall under the description of “*prima facie* evidence”, what would?



I thought that *prima facie* meant what appeared at first sight to be true, though it was often proved to be false when it was carefully examined. If there is some other definition in law showing that *prima facie* does not mean what it seems to mean, let it be known to the lay public.

On the morning of February 25th there was another loud explosion, but I am glad to hear that the extent of the damage when a Mekor Haim omnibus was bombed was in no way commensurate with the noise. The 'bus was burnt out, but there were no serious casualties.

*February 26th*

Clarissa's appeal for peace in Palestine, which I mentioned in a former chapter, was not, as I surmised, acceptable even to moderate Jews. There was a public appeal printed in January by the Emergency Committee of the Ashkenazic Jewish Community "to all parties fighting in the Holy City" which attracted little interest; and now the *Palestine Post* is asking why the voice of the City Fathers has not been heard.

I have had it in my mind for some time past to make proposals to the combatants for a cease fire in Jerusalem as a preliminary to a general peace, though without much hope of success, and when I read the leader in the *Post* I sat down and wrote a Project for Peace in Jerusalem, which I shall hand to the political leaders on both sides, after ascertaining that my proposals do not conflict with the views of the High Commissioner in respect of ways and means. In principle Sir Alan Cunningham is as anxious for peace as anyone in the country. My "project", which is written in everyday language and has none of the style of the major or minor prophets, contains a number of concrete proposals, which would certainly establish peaceful conditions if followed.

This afternoon I handed a copy of it to Roger Pawle for the High Commissioner, who was giving an address to the unofficial British community at the British Council's house. There I had a few words with Sir Alan, who said he would be glad to read my paper, but reminded me that projects for peace were being constantly discussed "at the highest level". I am sick of this phrase. It gives a mysterious weight and importance to the conversations of ill-informed politicians occupying high places, which are never reported to the public and which are too often



full of high-flown sentiments and banalities and seldom get down to the heart of the subject. This judgment would not apply to H.E.'s conversations with community leaders in Jerusalem so much as to the discussions at Lake Success, and probably in London. What I want to emphasise is that at the highest level (20,000 feet or so) the persons who live on it can only faintly discern the movements and needs of the earth-bound peoples who make up the world.

The advantages of my project are: (a) that it calls for detailed action and (b) that when it is published—as it should be—it will help to form public opinion. We are supposed to be living in a democratic age, but in fact partly owing to the secretiveness, sometimes justified, of Ministers, and partly owing to the shortage of newsprint, the public seems to be taken less into the confidence of the Government than at any time in the past sixty or seventy years. This is especially applicable to Palestine, which has no democratic institutions, no British Press—only strongly partisan local newspapers—and no Government propaganda worthy of the name. Anyhow, the public in Jerusalem have not an inkling regarding the peace overtures in this country or for this country, which have been made by the Palestine or British Government.

I showed my paper to the D.C., who had no criticism to make. He had himself composed an appeal for peace, which he had shown to the religious heads of the different communities. They were ready to sign it if the Mufti would give a lead to the Arabs and the Agency to the Jews. An emissary had been to Cairo to consult Hadj Amin, but had not yet returned. The appeal consisted of about ten lines of noble sentiments based upon the precepts of religion. Its value would entirely depend on the signatures, and it would have to be followed up by a set of rules regulating the security relations between the communities.

On February 27th I learned that H.E. had approved my project and passed it to the Chief Secretary, who was to discuss one or two points with me.

I have read it to various friends, who find it practical and impartial, but doubt whether either side will have enough wisdom or confidence in the other side to agree to abstain from reprisals after aggression. Of course the assent of the Arab Higher Executive depends entirely on the Mufti.

It was suggested to me by Saba Eff Said that I should fly to

Cairo and see Azzam, a friend of former days, who is by way of having much influence with the Mufti, with a view to persuading him to try out the plan. I am not very optimistic, as each day the inflammation gets worse. Perhaps when ten thousand lives have been lost both sides will feel less exuberant.

This morning I went up to the branch office. A few moments before I arrived six Stern gangsters had walked in, leaving two at the door. The others went to the Accountant's offices and held up the staff. They made a somewhat perfunctory search, and grabbed £285 in cash and £20 in cheques, leaving £750 undiscovered. I noticed one or two strangers at the gate, but didn't think anything of it. There seemed to be a bit of a flurry at the top of the stairs, but I suspected nothing and asked no questions, and walked straight down the corridor to Leibovitch's room, where I work. I heard about the incident a few minutes later. The cheques were obligingly returned by the thieves.

It is very fortunate that I did not go into Boury's room, as I usually do, as then I should either have been shot or had to hold my hands up and witness the crime, which would have been exasperating and humiliating.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MAYOR'S LOG (CONTINUED)

*March 1948*

*March 8th*

The best thing that has happened during the past week is the heavy rainfall, which came just when it was wanted and must have filled most of the cisterns. Jemil, my assistant water-manager, says that with a little more we shall have Solomon's Pools quite full. The sky seems to promise more, but it is unwise to count on it, though we have still got six weeks during which rain is likely to fall.

The situation at Ras el Ain is not good. Six hundred Iraqi soldiers have installed themselves in some buildings just outside the water-supply station. The British seem to have no intention of evicting them, and the English officer commanding the troops in the station has told the Jewish staff that he can't guarantee their safety if they stay—so they have gone off to Petah Tikvah.

The laundry and the other buildings in which the Iraqis are encamped formerly belonged to the Army, who sold them to an Arab. This is alleged to legalise the position of the Iraqis, who have been "invited to stay" by the new owner. As, however, these soldiers have no business to be in Palestine at all, this argument, which Brigadier K. used in describing the situation to me, savours of casuistry—what the Arabs call *felsefeh*. It seems pretty clear that H.M.G. do not intend to turn these intruders out, any more than to arrest Fauzy el Kawukji, who has been for eight years on the list of wanted rebels, or to extrude the thousands of Arabs who have penetrated into this country from Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan and other neighbouring lands. To do so would be to stultify the declarations of Government representatives in Parliament who will not admit that there are any organised Arab troops from the Arab countries now in Palestine.

However, it seems that there is no immediate threat to our water, and that the Iraqis have told the British O.C. that they will not interfere with the arrival of supplies or of any Jewish

staff called in to effect repairs. A new Arab electrician has been found, and must be already at the station.

The advance guard of UNO arrived on March 2nd. They are led by Dr. Azcarate, and the other members of the party are Colonel Lund, Mr. Ghosh and Mr. Stavropoulos, with Mrs. Tobin and Mrs. Owens.

Dr. Azcarate<sup>1</sup> was a senior official in the Secretariat of the League of Nations, and has also lived for many years in England without acquiring the accent of Stratford atte Bowe. Lund is a Scandinavian, and looks hard-headed and straightforward. Stavropoulos was here with the UNSCOP Committee and has some knowledge of the situation. He is a very urbane and agreeable man, and easily won my good graces by speaking in the friendliest way of Philip's<sup>2</sup> enlightened appreciation of Greek politics.

Ghosh is an Indian, an ex-professor of economics, and I understand that he will be interested in the affairs of the Municipality. I do not believe in Hindus as Gordian-knot-cutters or regard them as capable of mastering desperate situations. Mrs. Tobin and Mrs. Owens are very decorative. They were greatly upset to find that there were no servants to look after them in the quarters reserved for their party opposite the King David. They have now got a Jewish maid and a cook, who will of course have to be escorted whenever they are outside the house. I met this party at a small gathering at Government House on March 5th to which Clarissa and I were invited. I feel sorry for them, but am glad they are here, and sincerely hope they will take a realistic view of this truly damnable situation.

On March 3rd I made an advance declaration of bankruptcy to the Press at a conference in the P.I.O.'s office, and was politely heckled for an hour afterwards. I invited the journalists to appeal to the public to pay their rates and taxes, but as far as I can see the local newspapers have done nothing useful at all. They have reported in a summary manner the gist of my statement, but have not called upon the citizens to fulfil their obligations. Though there are still a few people who think that

<sup>1</sup> I had to return to England to learn that Dr. Azcarate had been Ambassador of the Spanish Republic in London.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Graves, formerly correspondent of the *Times* in Turkey and other Near Eastern countries.

the British will stay on in spite of our spokesmen's reiterated affirmations that we are certainly going, and a few others—fewer, perhaps—who believe that UNO will fulfil their programme for Jerusalem, the general belief is that we are heading for chaos, and there is no sense in giving money to an expiring government or a moribund municipality.

I have now written to Dr. Khalidi suggesting that each community should take some part in the work of the Municipality by selecting a small advisory committee to make recommendations to the Commission and help to look after the municipal areas. Their duty would also be to urge the ratepayers to pay their rates on the understanding that we should undertake that no money contributed by the Arabs would be spent on the Jews and vice versa. There is a catch in this, as more money is contributed by the Jews than by the Arabs and less spent at present on the Jewish area and Jewish personnel. If the Arabs notice this, they probably will not "play ball" with us, but I may be able to persuade them that it is beneath their dignity to accept favours from their rivals.

The Jews will probably be prepared to co-operate, but I fear that the Arabs may think that co-operating with me and the Commission is equivalent to co-operating with the Jews.

I find that contemplating the future of the Municipality is a very depressing exercise, and in the early morning, when one's spirits are at zero, I usually decide to throw up the sponge, only to question the promptings of pessimism when I have had my breakfast and my blood and my thoughts have begun to circulate. Shall I ever begin the day with those words in my heart which Orme's French butler used to say when he came into my bedroom at Bibury at eight o'clock, chanting, "*la vie est belle*"?

A corrective to the gloomy forebodings which fill one's mind during so many hours of the day has been rehearsing for an evening of poetry reading over which I am presiding at the British Council on March 11th. We are having a mixed programme, with a lot of old favourites and some modern poems, one of which, Blunden's "Episode in Hyde Park", was new to me. I shall act as compère, and have written the patter, which is and must be very short, as we have twenty-three poems to read. The entertainment will end with "The old man a-sitting on a gate", which White does very well. Mrs. Hogan, who is one

of my team, is a Kipling fan, which is curious in a young woman in this year of grace.

To remind myself of the great difficulties of transport in Jerusalem I shall record how yesterday I returned my piano from our house in the German Colony to its owner, Rosenberger, a Jewish employee in Barclay's Bank, who lives in Rehavia. Moving furniture from the Arab to the Jewish area is not easy, and can be dangerous. I do not know how I should have managed if I had not been able to command the services of our sanitary department.

A truck appeared at the house at 9.30. The driver and three men, not being professional piano-movers, could not lift the piano on to the truck without the aid of a couple of other municipal sweepers whom they found in the neighbourhood. The truck had to be driven into the garden, and, as it was a broad-gauge affair, one set of wheels passed over the pansy bed near the gate. When the instrument was safely on board I drove up with it to the barrier of Zone B near the Jewish Agency, where I was met by the owner and Ginio, the senior Jewish driver, who took it over from the Arab driver and drove it to Rosenberger's house in the Gaza Road. But I could not get it through the barrier before satisfying the British soldiers and the Jewish guards on their side of the zone gate that it did not contain explosives. It was a good piano—the only Ibach I have ever had.

### *March 9th*

Yesterday I went to the Jewish Agency to see Mr. Ben Gurion about my peace project. I should say that the draft of this document had been slightly altered after a discussion with the Chief Secretary. Ben Gurion was still at Government House having a consultation with the High Commissioner when I arrived, but I passed the time with Leo Kohn, who is always good company.

After Ben Gurion came I found him in a room at the back of the building, surrounded with secretaries—or were they members of his bodyguard? I thought, perhaps irrelevantly, of Goebbels in the midst of his posse of heavy-weights in the hall of Mena House about ten years before. Ben Gurion's room is beyond Kaplan's, and looks out towards the west, from which side shooting is not likely to come.



Ben Gurion had not much time for discussion, and there was not much to discuss after he had said that he was not interested in the details of my plan, which he considered unnecessary. He said he considered that the clause recommending the removal of armed Jews from the Old City and proposing to entrust the Orthodox Jews of the Zion quarter to the protection of the Arabs was insulting to the Jews, and applied the same term to the proposal that Jews and Arabs should, for the time being, confine their movements to their respective areas. I told him he had no right so to interpret the disinterested proposals of a lover of Jerusalem eager to restore peace and civilisation to the city, on which he said that he meant nothing personal, but that the ideas contained in these two proposals were in essence insulting to the Jews. He concluded by saying that he did not want to set up any rules of conduct to be adopted by the Jews and the Arabs, but was ready to undertake that for an agreed specified period—a week, a month, or a year—the Jews would not fire a shot in Jerusalem if the Arabs would give a similar undertaking and stick to it. I asked him how he would be able to exact obedience from his dissidents (the I.Z.L. and the Sternists). He said he would be able to do so, but didn't say how.

Ben Gurion gave me the impression of being very confident about the eventual outcome of the conflict, and consequently being unwilling to make partial concessions and accommodations. I do not think there is the least likelihood that the Arabs will agree to any vague and general proposal for a cease fire.

On the 9th I received a letter from the Agency conveying the gist of Mr. Ben Gurion's statement to me, and immediately passed it on to Dr. Khalidi. The latter is unfortunately in Beyrouth, and his people don't know when he will be back.

Meantime it appears that UNO has approached the Arab nations and asked them to agree to an armistice. They have answered that they are ready to accept a truce if the United Nations will abandon the partition plan. Meantime, no real progress is being made at Lake Success, and the prospect of intervention to impose partition is receding. No nation seems anxious to intervene in this dog-fight, though doubtless the Russians would like to be asked to do so.

March 17th

A lot of things have happened since my last entry. Part of the Agency—that in which are the offices of the Keren Hayesod—has been blown up, with the loss of about fifteen lives and about forty wounded. Among the well-known dead were Leib Jaffe and Alice Lasker, a woman of the finest character. Leo Kohn and Ben Zvi, Chairman of the Jewish National Council, escaped unhurt, also Mrs. Sambursky. Nebi Samuel<sup>1</sup> was in the building talking to Eytan. He was cut about the face by flying glass, but not seriously hurt. That reminds me that another recent British casualty was Hugh Astor,<sup>2</sup> who was shot through his good leg while in a car with Caminada<sup>3</sup> at Haifa.

The bombing of the Agency was achieved through a very dirty trick. The Arab chauffeur of the American Consulate-General appeared about 10 a.m. in a consular car with the flag flying, and drove past the barrier at the entrance to the courtyard. It seems that he was well known to the men at the barrier, who admitted him without question. He stopped the car by the Keren-Hayesod building and got out. Since then he has not been seen, but it is reported that he has gone to Damascus. This technique was originally introduced into Palestine by the Jewish terrorists, but this fact does not extenuate the guilt of the outrage.

The Jews are rightly enough making capital out of this indecency, which is on a par with the mutilation of Jewish dead—a common practice at the beginning of the troubles. Mr. Macatee<sup>4</sup> must be absolutely disgusted as well as horrified by the misuse of his flag and his car.

Shortly after the explosion, of which we had a view from the office balcony, I had to go and see the UNO "forerunners" to discuss the Municipality and the prospect of its continuance. We had a useful exchange of views and information, in which the Town Clerk gave me valuable support. The UNO people were very civil, sympathetic and understanding. They are very anxious that the Municipality should continue to function. It

<sup>1</sup> The Honble. Edwin Samuel, son of the Liberal leader, nicknamed "Nebi" after the hilltop village of Nebi Samwil, a couple of miles north of Jerusalem, which was the scene of stubborn fighting at the time of Allenby's conquest. Edwin Samuel was then an officer in the British Army and subsequently an official in the Palestine Government.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Astor, son of the Chairman of the Times Publishing Co.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Caminada was correspondent of the *Times* in Palestine.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Macatee—the United States Consul-General.

will be, if it survives, the only properly constituted body having authority in Jerusalem after the end of the Mandate, unless something drastic is done by UNO to set up the international State of Jerusalem. They seem to appreciate what is going on here and whither events are tending, and are doubtless reporting faithfully to Mr. Lie. (What ill-omened names are connected with UNO—Lake Success and the Secretary-General's! I wonder the numerologists didn't make an outcry at the start.)

Dr. Azcarate is a believer in partition, for the reason that he is convinced that the Arab State could never digest and assimilate the huge and tough chunk of Jewry, which it will contain and which holds out an early prospect of a duodenal. Metaphors are often misleading, but if this one is to the point, it applies, and even more strongly, to the projected Jewish State with a population of 470,000 Arabs. Dr. Azcarate assured me that as a Spaniard he had much sympathy, and almost a feeling of kinship, with the Arabs, and was at least as strongly interested in their prosperity as in that of the Jews.

As an exiled republican, he would have no truck with the Spanish Consul-General in Jerusalem. I hope Englishmen will never be in such a relation with one another.

One couldn't help feeling the weakness of UNO while discussing the Palestine situation with these emissaries. It is true that this group consists of Civil Servants, and not delegates, which means that they are better informed and less influential than delegates would be. The trouble is that the whole outfit is so constituted that it requires incredible efforts and much good luck to get any enforceable decision at all. The prospects of world collaboration will be dark as long as the semi-civilised and new States, which are really in the majority, cling convulsively to the idea of national sovereignty, which some of us older boys are almost ready to resign in favour of internationalism in security and economics.

As we were leaving the UNO office at about 1.15 we found young Herzog in the ante-room telling the story of the Agency outrage to Colonel Lund. Herzog, son of the Chief Rabbi, is an ex-serviceman and, I think, a former major in the Jewish Brigade. He and his brother, also a Rabbi, speak English with an authentic Dublin accent.

Our poetry-reading on the 11th was quite successful, though the audience was small. The best tribute to the entertainment

was paid by Mrs. R., wife of Wing Commander R., who said that her husband had hitherto been recalcitrant to poetry, found some interest when he attended the British Council's first poetry-reading, and was finally converted and left the room, she says, a poetry-lover after our performance.

On March 13th we had a luncheon-party at which were Katie Antonius, Fitz and Mr. and Mrs. Capsambelis. Very pleasant; only we others talked too much, and Capsambelis, whose English is not fluent, too little.

Katie was in trouble about her house, which has been taken over by the H.L.I. (it belongs to the Mufti) and has sustained the usual damage. She complained of breakages, spoiling of the parquet floor, damage to trellises and the conversion of the garden into a football ground; and all this after solemn assurances from the Army that the property would be respected.

We had very heavy rain during the week-end, and the rainfall for the year is now 23 inches, which is near enough to the normal to be satisfactory.

The other day there was a rumour that the Jerusalem water supply had been poisoned with cholera and other germs. I ridiculed it at first, but as a precaution decided to ask the D.M.S. if he knew anything about it. Dr. Lester told me that samples had been taken by the Army and the Health Department, and the water was found to be "grossly under-chlorinated". I fancy the Arabs had seized on the rumour with some avidity, as they would like to be able to father some scientific atrocity on the Jews. I spoke to Nebi Samuel, and got him to make a broadcast, approved by Lester, telling the truth about the matter, advising people to boil their drinking-water and generally reassuring the citizens. It seems that chlorination, which used to be done at the Seris pumping-station, has been neglected since the Jewish station engineer has had to go to Ras el Ain for security reasons (now Ras el Ain is no longer secure for the Jews). Chlorination is apparently not exactly a fool-proof process, and the subordinate Arab staff at Seris don't precisely know how to do it. Now we have a new chlorination outfit installed and working at Romema, and hope to hear no more about microbes in the water.

Berg, one of our senior engineers, has been at Ras el Ain for the last few days. He was allowed to visit the station by the

favour of the Iraqi commander, with whom he negotiated on the telephone from Petah Tikvah. The O.C. told him that if he came alone and unarmed he would be passed through the lines. He apparently expected that Berg would not take the risk, as he showed great surprise when Berg eventually turned up. Berg said he was a presentable chap and that the Iraqi soldiers were well equipped and obviously disciplined. He found the Arab staff working well and anxious to keep everything in good order. Berg is a good type technically and humanly.

I am reading a book by Nigel Balchin called "The Small Back Room". It opens very well, but I was shaken when I came to the following passage: "Don't just hand it over to Graves. He doesn't know anything about anything." I sometimes feel like that about myself when it comes to thinking about economics, physics, mechanics and mathematics—a good slice off the joint of knowledge.

It might be in the interest of the Municipality to dissolve the Commission at the end of the month and enlist, if possible, the collaboration of two emergency Citizens' Committees to advise on the administration of their respective areas. The Jews would probably agree, provided that the funds contributed by Jewish ratepayers were spent exclusively on their own area. The Arabs are determined to boycott the Commission, but might work temporarily with me until May 15th.

#### *March 20th*

The whole situation has suddenly altered as a result of the declaration by three members of the Big Four that partition is unworkable and cannot be implemented.

We shall have to see what Gromyko will say when he gets instructions from his Government, but I cannot imagine that an offer by Russia to put partition through single-handed would ever be accepted. There will now have to be an emergency meeting of the General Assembly, and the sooner the better. Apparently America, France and China recommend an unitary State under the trusteeship of the United Nations. Rabbi Silver and other representatives of the Jewish Agency have declared that they will go forward and "realise" the Jewish State. This would be an intelligible attitude if the Jews had an assurance of foreign aid, which I greatly doubt. Without such assurance it



is a gesture of defiance to a hesitant world, but a gesture which the moderates will not dare to disown, for the Irgun, Sternists and probably the Haganá will use force to make the Yishuv "fight for their rights".

UNO's *volte-face* must be a tremendous disappointment to the political Jews, if not to far-seeing persons like Magnes, or to the scores of thousands of "quiet-lifers" who came to Palestine in the 'thirties. Unfortunately none of the youth, or almost none, belongs to this category, and we shall have a strong irredentist group till kingdom come if the Jewish State is not set up.

The Jews, of course, blame the change in UNO's attitude on the British, who, they say, have connived at chaos and civil strife in Palestine with the object of proving to the world that partition would never work. It may now be difficult to get any collaboration from the Jews in municipal administration, but I doubt this, and in the meantime the Arabs may become more amenable.

In any case, prospects are not good, but possibly they are better than when the partition decision was still standing.

There is a considerable difference in the appearance of the Arab quarters of the town as compared with a few months ago, and this is very noticeable in the German and Greek colonies. There has been an enormous increase in the number of tarboush wearers and the manufacturers and shopkeepers have made a lot of money. The tarboush, which used to cost about seven shillings when I wore one in the Ministry in Cairo, is now sold for something between £2 and £3. "Faisaliyehs"<sup>1</sup> are less common, but not rare, and a great many people wear the keffiyeh and agal, which is the sloppiest headgear I know.

Another new feature is the number of young men wearing riding-breeches and stockings or knickerbockers and stockings—hardly ever gaiters or boots, though Garabedian has opened a shop in the German Colony. I think this is regarded as a half-way house to being in uniform, a token of readiness to volunteer for national service. And a lot of Arabs have allowed their moustaches to grow long. These are usually accompanied by three days' growth of stubble on the cheeks and chin, to give the impression of being fresh from the front. Half the men carry

<sup>1</sup> The Faisaliyeh is a black or brown "service cap". The keffiyeh is a cloth, of any colour, thrown over the head and kept in position by the agal, a head-ring of plaited horse-hair.



rifles, revolvers or automatics, and not a few tommy-guns can be seen in civilian hands. Boys of thirteen or fourteen upwards have pistols, and below that age catapults. The firearms are used for shooting at invisible enemies at night and, occasionally, at fellow-creatures by day. They are sometimes employed, by arrangement, for calling taxis.

What is very noticeable is that in spite of the consistent unfriendliness of the Arabic Press towards the British, more young Arabs, of both sexes, talk to one another in English in public than ever in my experience. In the Katamon bridge club all the members are Arab or Armenian, but all the bidding and most of the back-chat are in English, though Arabic and French are also heard. On the streets one constantly hears young people talking fairly good English to one another in the sing-song Jerusalem accent, which reminds one, somehow, of the English of Wales.

I believe that a great many Arabs wish that the British were going to stay on a bit longer, and dread the chaos which will follow our premature evacuation. Reverting to that painful theme, one of the things I most resent is the constant repetition in the Press and on the radio, usually in resonant and impressive tones, of the unalterable resolution of the British people—to do what?—to surrender the Mandate and evacuate our troops on the dates so often announced. The phraseology of the scribes and the articulation of the announcers would be appropriate to the Churchillian declaration after Dunkirk, but they seem strangely out of place in an announcement that we are throwing up the sponge.

When I was a boy and a young man the death-roll in the British Army in India as a result of small wars and disease was probably higher annually than it has been in Palestine during the past four years. Nobody complained, and the public and the families of the casualties realised that when a young man put on a soldier's uniform, getting killed was one of the risks of the trade. It is quite true that British soldiers and policemen are being killed without advantage to Britain and in a quarrel between foreigners, but their presence in Palestine, as long as they were successful in keeping order, was a contribution to British prestige, as well as a boon to law-abiding citizens. Perhaps that is the real criterion of the thing being worth while—namely, the ability to keep order and the reputation they

earn for their country by exercising it. Otherwise we might now deplore as useless the loss of British lives during our long occupation of India. The single aspect, divorced from considerations of prestige or political profit—namely, the service rendered to fellow-creatures by protecting the lives and possessions of citizens entrusted to our care—no longer seems to appeal to the British public.

*March 26th*

There have been developments but no progress in the political situation during the last few days. The Arabs originally said they would accept a U.N. trusteeship provided it was temporary, and the Jews said they would accept nothing less than the State awarded them on November 29th. There have been some angry reactions in the U.S.A. to the American change of attitude, and President Truman has himself expressed displeasure at the new decision. He interprets the proposal to place Palestine under a trusteeship as a temporary solution pending the time when partition can be put into effect. That has upset the Arabs in their turn. The latest proposal of the Jews is that 10,000 Scandinavians now in the army of occupation in Germany should be sent here to keep order in Jerusalem, but I don't suppose for a moment that Norway or Denmark would welcome such a suggestion. Meanwhile Truman has courageously declared that he does not mean to send a single American to keep order here, and in the same breath has sternly called the Arabs and Jews to order.

I no longer feel that an impartial foreigner, however much he might be respected in peace-time, would stand the faintest chance of keeping both sides of the Municipality going, once the two communities officially and without inhibition fly at each other's throats—that is to say, on May 15th. So I am beginning to make arrangements for departure. Most people think there will be a dog-fight in the fortress area and the Jews are likely to get in first. They will then be pounded with artillery, and there is a good chance that the Generali buildings, Barclay's and the Post Office will be knocked to pieces; our offices will certainly collapse in sympathy.

I wonder when the Municipality will recover from its financial losses. As a human being I deplore and condemn the uncompromising violence of both sides, while I have no words for the lack of common-sense which the delegates at Lake Success

have shown. However, I ask myself how I would react to the prospect of partition if I were an Arab. If I were a Jew I know I should be a Magnesians, and should feel bitter against leaders like Rabbi Silver and Ben Gurion, and utterly disgusted with the human gorillas who have been practising terrorism for the last six years. It seems to me that at this stage of the world's regress into barbarism it wouldn't be a bad thing to seek for peace in the bosom of religion. The thought reminds me that this morning, being Good Friday, Clarissa and I went to Church at St. Andrews by the Scottish Hospice. We had a very distinguished panel of ministers, the leader of whom was the Chief Moderator of the General Assembly of the Scottish Church. He read an excellent sermon which he had composed for the occasion, and I wouldn't have had him alter a single word of it. St. Andrews is a beautiful building, and large enough to hold a good-sized congregation, which we had.

It gives one some satisfaction to think that the Christian Churches, and in particular our Churches, Anglican and Scottish, will carry on in Jerusalem however much the nations furiously rage together, and will form islets of civilisation in a savage scene.

### *March 27th*

This morning I sent Park and Roy to discuss fire-brigade problems, and especially fire risks, with Colonel Lund of UNO. The Colonel was anxious to find out what parts of the town were especially inflammable and what equipment we had for fire-fighting.

I went myself into the Old City—for the second time this week—to see Anwar el Noseibeh on the subject of possible co-operation between the Arab community and the Municipality. Anwar Eff is one of the most influential members of the Arab National Committee, which takes its orders in matters of policy from the Arab Higher Executive. He is a former judge, and to the best of my recollection an old blue for lawn-tennis at Cambridge.<sup>1</sup> The Committee are established in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, in which they have put up a lot of partition walls in grey brick to make offices for the employees. There is the usual untidy, armed crowd at the entrance, who welcomed me and Captain Nashashibi very politely.

<sup>1</sup> His friends will be distressed to hear that he was severely wounded in the civil war and has lost a leg.

I explained our situation to Noseibeh, whom I have known for a number of years, and told him that the Jews are prepared to work with us in a separate partition provided that no Jewish contributions go to the Arabs. I said I hoped that a corresponding arrangement would be acceptable to the Arabs. At this he laughed and said, "Yes, in principle," but in fact we should like to have the Jewish money." He promised to submit the proposal to his committee, who would have to ask the Arab Higher Executive for a directive.

He did not seem very hopeful about an acceptance, and was obviously influenced by the partition bogey. He said that if the proposal had been to assist in the administration of the whole town to the exclusion of the Jews, his people would certainly agree to it. I argued that my proposal committed the Arabs to nothing permanent and would merely have the effect of tiding the Municipality over the remaining period of the British occupation, after which the Arabs would perforce have to take over the municipal responsibilities of their area and any other area they might succeed in conquering. I pointed out that the handing over of Arab assets would be much easier if there were already a committee in existence familiar with conditions and anxious to save records, cash, equipment and so on from destruction. He seemed to agree, but I am expecting a negative reply.

Dr. Khalidi has not yet returned from Syria and the Lebanon, where he has been for three weeks, and Ahmed Hilmy Pasha is acting secretary to the Arab Higher Executive.

. . . . .

Yesterday there was news of heavy fighting south of Bethlehem. A convoy of Jews left Talpioth in the early morning to carry supplies to Kfar Etsion. It is said that they were dressed in British uniforms. On the way down they passed the Arab road-blocks successfully. However, the Arabs were waiting for them on their return, and several of the trucks were destroyed and the remainder immobilised. A number of Jews was killed, and the survivors are now said to be defending themselves in a house at Nebi Danial. They have had some assistance from Jewish aeroplanes and—to judge from the thuds in the far distance which one hears every ten minutes or so in Jerusalem this morning, Easter Sunday—from British artillery as well.

. . . . .

Yesterday the correspondent of a popular and powerful English daily came to see me to get some information about my peace project, which, at the request of the Arab and Jewish leaders, I have not yet published. I let him read the text and showed him the answers from the Jews and Arabs. He wants to give it a limited publicity, and I see no objection.

He takes the Jerusalem situation very seriously, and thinks that the dangers to the city are not realised at home. I trust he will be allowed to bring them home to the millions of readers of his paper. He does not believe that mere possession of anything which you do not put to good use gives you an inalienable title to it, and thinks that the Jewish claim to territory here is justified by the Arab failure to develop their country as well as by the traditional association of the Jews with Palestine. He said he was an internationalist at heart and thought that the world should be heading towards internationalism. I reminded him that this belief didn't constitute an argument for exclusive possession of Palestine by Jews or Arabs, as both of them were as nationalistic as possible.

I have at last had a letter from Orme,<sup>1</sup> and a long and interesting one at that. He is naturally exercised about world politics, and says "The real question, to my mind, is whether and, if so, at what point of time or place the communist advance is to be checked. It may be that the result of the Italian elections will be the occasion, if there is sufficient support for the communists to make them try to establish their regime—possibly in part of the country. We, as democrats, are in a dialectical difficulty in that case as, if a sufficient number of voters support the cause and wish for a communist government, it is difficult to say they shan't have it. But whatever happens to Italy in the near future the problem remains."

I met this evening a member of the Husseini family, who served with the British Army from Alamein to Italy. He is a kinsman of the Mufti, but a member of the Nashashibi party. He says that he hopes for peace in Palestine and is opposed to partition.

He professes to a knowledge of military matters, and affirms with conviction, after having seen the Arab invading forces in Samaria, that the Jews will be beaten in three months, though

<sup>1</sup> The late Sir Orme Clarke, Bt., C.B.E., Squire of Bibury.



he admits that Arab organisation leaves much to be desired. He told me that neither the A.H.E. nor the military staff at Nablus had much authority over the fighting men, and that a great deal of skirmishing is being carried on by private initiative and independently of the higher command.

Meantime Dr. Magnes has made a general appeal for peace in the name of the Ehud,<sup>1</sup> and the Archbishop of York has appealed to Christians in the U.S.A. to save Jerusalem.

### *March 31st*

No improvement in the situation during the last few days, although things have been happening. The Jewish convoy which had been held up while returning from Kfar Etsion was finally rescued by the British Army, who got them a safe conduct back to Jerusalem on condition they surrendered their arms and vehicles. They were enormously outnumbered by the Arabs, of whom they claim to have killed over a hundred, but these were mainly Hebronites and villagers from the Hebron area, and were probably as badly organised as possible. Anyhow, the *Palestine Post* has made nonsense of the story, and instead of thanking God and the British that the 210 survivors were not all killed, it complains of the insecurity on the roads due to British neglect, and declares, contrary to the truth, that we took over the arms of the men in the convoy, promising to restore them in Jerusalem. This is manifest rubbish: the Arabs, who were in a position to annihilate the Jewish force in a few days, would never have consented to such an arrangement. If we had used force to save the Jews with their arms, we should have lost British lives on the spot, and no doubt later on, as a reprisal, in Jerusalem. Only about twelve members of the convoy were killed and from thirty to forty wounded. Some heads were cut off the bodies of the fallen Jews and have been carried round Jerusalem as trophies of victory. A British member of my staff met a youngster in the German Colony yesterday, who showed him a handful of severed fingers. Of course a lot of Arabs are still primitive savages, and it is easy to understand the disinclination of the Jews to be ruled by them. What is depressing is the fact that the fairly numerous civilised Arabs make little or no

<sup>1</sup> The party, led by Dr. Magnes, favouring an Arab-Jewish unitary state with equal representation for Jews and Arabs, whatever their present or eventual population, and no restrictions on immigration.



effort to civilise the others and will not understand that their own faces are blackened by the barbarity of their rank and file.

I well remember Ziwer Pasha<sup>1</sup> saying to me, "My dear Graves, don't you yet realise that human kindness is rare among us Orientals, and that most of us are prepared to do our neighbour a bad turn, if the occasion offers?"

Old Ziwer himself was a thoroughly kind-hearted and charitable man, and, though a Moslem, an excellent Christian. He had usually been at the top of his class for religion at the Jesuits' College, and much of what he had learned at school had become second nature to him.

Another instance of barbarity, this time attributed to the Jews, was the cold-blooded murder of Miss Thompson, who was yesterday mortally wounded on the Bethlehem Road. It is not absolutely certain that the murderers were Jews, but highly probable, and there seems a chance that the truth will eventually be known. She had done splendid welfare work in this country for the last ten years, and was greatly appreciated by Jews and Arabs, but in the end the gorillas destroyed her.

There was a timely announcement last night on the radio by the head of the Geneva Red Cross Mission, who told the communities that his organisation would be ready to help them if the combatants observed the rules of the Geneva Convention, but not otherwise. He then enumerated the principal rules, all of which are violated daily by the belligerents.

Meantime UNO is calling for a truce, and the Pope is also making his voice heard.

News has at last come from the Colonial Office about their attitude towards the British Staff of the Municipality. It is what is locally called "negative". There is not the slightest intention of assimilating British municipal officials to Government officers, though it would have cost very little to do so. The most the Colonial Office will do is to promise advances to pensionable officials who cannot get their pensions paid. The Secretary of State has also very kindly said that if the Municipality cares to pay the cost of transport of officials' effects to the United Kingdom on the same scale as Government do for their own officers, he will have no objection. These decisions will be

<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Ziwer Pasha, Prime Minister of Egypt in the 'twenties and a legendary figure.

received without enthusiasm by men who have spent long years with the Municipality, always under the impression that they enjoyed the protection of the Colonial Office. They also raise certain important questions, which it will be difficult for us, in our present financial distress, to answer.

During the last few minutes I have been listening with one ear to a requiem programme from the B.B.C., which included the funeral oration of Pericles, "Fear no more the heat of the sun", and some of Lycidas, with music by Vaughan-Williams in the intervals. The reading was very good, and the sentiments attuned to the tragedy of Palestine, which, with the help of a bullet *obbligato* that has been going on the whole evening, does not allow itself to be forgotten.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MAYOR'S LOG (CONTINUED)

*April 1948*

*April 1st—10 p.m.*

I had a talk with the District Commissioner yesterday afternoon about the Municipal Commission and how to run the Municipality until the Mandate expires. He seemed to think that Government would be willing to see two emergency citizens' committees set up to advise me, but was not sure whether, if only one community were ready to function, they would not prefer to see the Municipality run by a new Commission until we go. The present Commission is disintegrating owing to the departure of most of the British members, and we can no longer count on the Palestinian members, who are under strong pressure from their communities. (As I write, three heavy explosions have occurred. It sounds as if they were in the direction of the city, but sound is very misleading here, and they may turn out to be incidents in one of the nightly battles round Beit-Safafa and Mekor Haim.) The Treasurer and the Municipal Advocate think it is not worth while splitting the responsibility for the Municipality for the next six weeks, because firstly that would upset the Arabs, on the ground that it would be implementing partition, and secondly because co-operation with a Jewish committee would not bring in more than a very few thousand pounds in revenue. (Explosions now total seven: they sound like mortars.)

This morning I went with Clarissa to Miss Thompson's funeral. There were only about thirty people present—attendance at funerals is sometimes unsafe—and the whole scene was very pathetic. There had been firing in Old Montefiore earlier, but during the funeral service everything was quiet except for one distant explosion. It was sad to think of this fine woman cut down in her prime, and the fact that she was due to leave for home next week accentuates the tragedy.

This so-called war is a disgrace to the humanity of the two communities who are waging it. Yesterday the Stern Gang blew up the Haifa-Cairo train and killed forty Arabs, wounding sixty. For a change, none of the British soldiers on the train was hurt.

*April 3rd*

I spent a few hours at the branch office to-day and had a long talk with Berg about conditions at Ras el Ain and on the pipeline. An arrangement has now been made with the Iraqis enabling us to bring in materials needed for maintenance once a week from Petah Tikvah, and the Army have promised to send us a sapper officer with technical knowledge if there is any breakdown in the electricity. We should prefer to use our own people, who are perfectly familiar with the plant, but it should be possible to arrange for the officer to be accompanied by one or two members of the Jewish staff if repairs have to be done.

The two erectors, Gemmell and Oates from Harland's, are returning to the United Kingdom as soon as possible; one of them will be flying, and the other, who has a lot of tools with him, wishes to travel by sea.

There has been no more talk about the Jewish emergency committee, and it may be better to carry on as at present until the end of the Mandate.

*April 4th*

The call for a truce issued by UNO yesterday morning is generally thought to be a step in the right direction, but it has not been received with any enthusiasm here as yet. The Zionists, taking their cue from Shertok, say, "No truce without an assurance of partition", and the Arab patriots, "No truce unless partition is cancelled". A lot of moderates on either side would be glad to see a truce for a start, regardless of the final political settlement. A Jewish friend told me to-day that he had listened to the High Commissioner's broadcast with interest, but asked himself what the sanctions would be if either party refused UNO's truce proposals. The suggestion that refusal would prejudice their cause was not enough. What would UNO do to them? I have a further question. What will UNO do if both sides refuse the truce? In that case one cause would not be prejudiced more than the other. At the present moment the political leaders are dead against compromise, and it looks as though much more blood will have to flow before any settlement can be reached.

The *Palestine Post* has published some more casualty figures. Its records give a total of 924 Jews killed and 1,651 wounded since December 1st, while the police figures are 851 Jews killed and 1,787 wounded. The *Post's* figures for the Arabs are 1,762

killed and 2,591 wounded. At the lowest estimate that means well over 5,000 casualties in the four months of civil skirmishing. In addition, 115 British soldiers and policemen have lost their lives. I expect the true figures are about half-way between the *Post's* and the police figures. The Arab figures as published in the *Falastin* and the *Difa's* are obviously all wrong.

A new Apostolic Delegate has been appointed—Archbishop Gustavo Testa, who served for four years in the same office in Cairo. The Italians are beginning to get their heads above water again in the Levant, which is a good thing.

Silimbani sent me an official letter the other day announcing that he had been officially recognised as Italian Consul-General by the Palestine Government. He must be looking forward to moving into the old Italian consulate, which is now used as a military court. It is a very fine building, which the Jewish terrorists have long been plotting to blow up. It would be a great misfortune if it were destroyed, as it is one of several beautiful houses built by my friend Paolo Caccia in the Near East and does honour to modern Italian architecture.

Things seem to be moving a little faster towards the end of an orderly life in Palestine. We had what will probably prove to be the last meeting of the Municipal Commission yesterday. At it Jamal Toukan announced that for personal reasons he would be unable to continue as a member of the Commission, meaning thereby that the Arabs who aspire to form the successor government have no interest in a commission of foreigners and would prefer that no Arab should be a member of it. It is just as well to have some advance knowledge of the future attitude of Arab leaders, and it has become obvious that they have no present intention of employing any Britons in any municipality they control. Consequently I have no longer any misgivings about leaving with the rearguard of the administration, as by that time my value to the city will have expired with the Mandate.

The question of British officials who have served for long years towards a pension has been exercising my mind lately. Park, Gill, Roy and Smith are the men in question, and they have served twenty, twenty-eight, ten and twenty-one years respectively. Had they been in Government service they would have been entitled to a sixtieth of their pay as pension for each year of service. But they have not reached pensionable age, nor



are they infirm of mind or body, nor can we reasonably abolish their important posts, nor can we sack them for inefficiency, as they are all efficient. So, after much consideration and consultation with the Attorney-General, I proposed to the Commission that every Englishman in our service should be given whatever leave is due to him as soon as it becomes clear that he will not be able to remain at his post. Pay for leave must be advanced, to enable officials to transfer their money home, which may be impossible after the end of this month. At the end of their leave, or before the end, it will be easier to know if they can return, or if they are wanted by the successor municipality—which is unlikely. If the answer in both cases is in the negative the officials will apply to the new municipality for their pensions.

If these are refused, pressure should be put through H.M. Minister on the successor Government. I understand that in the case of irrecoverable debts in Palestine we shall retain the amount of sterling balance required to pay them and settle similar claims. Personally I think it improbable that the Municipality will default, but at the meeting of the Commission we felt they might be tempted to do so if they were faced with decisions tending to bind them, such as a resolution to abolish important posts merely to make certain British officials pensionable.

For the same reason we refrained from making promotions, which in normal times we should have approved, and from confirming Safieh, our competent treasurer, in his post.

I have begun to make preparations for departure, and am warned that I shall have to get all my heavy luggage away and sent on in advance by the middle of April, as we may be short of transport by the beginning of May. At the present moment convoys may be inconvenienced after Jenin, as a biggish Arab force is attacking the large settlement of Mishmar Haemak, on the Jenin-Haifa road. According to Jewish accounts, the Arabs have done very little damage and have lost a lot of men, but Arab newspapers say that the settlement was destroyed in ninety minutes. I fancy the Jewish account is fairly accurate, and that the Arab version is what the *Palestine Post* calls narghileh news.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The narghileh is the hubble-bubble or water-pipe which encourages idle dreams and wishful thinking.



The IZL did a very dirty piece of work at Pardess Hanna camp yesterday morning, when they robbed the armoury, murdered the guard in cold blood, killed the C.O. and wounded seven soldiers. They got away with a lot of arms and killed six persons altogether. Apart from the fact that this is a filthy crime with not a shadow of moral justification, it is also an act of supreme stupidity to saddle Jewry with a new load of British resentment at a moment when they have their hands more than full fighting the Arabs. The terrorists have often been likened to mad dogs, and rightly so, though they do not suffer from the red-eyed frantic form of rabies, which drives mad dogs like bullets down the middle of the street. Their madness is marked by a calculating, perverse form of reasoning based partly on the memory of ill-usage and partly on a blank inability to see anyone else's point of view. They have a sort of two-eyed, inward squint, and the curious thing is that some of their leaders and spokesmen, if morally defective, are far from being mentally so. Their staff work and planning are first class, and their propaganda must be very heartening to their own adepts, though it would convert very few intelligent neutrals. The descriptions of terrorists in "Thieves in the Night" are very impressive, but perhaps they don't deserve too much credence. Koestler's portraits of British officials are so bad that his terrorists may not be quite authentic. I feel pretty certain that the convinced terrorists in Palestine—I mean the leaders rather than the gunmen—are trained in the ruthless Communist technique, which turns a man into an efficient machine designed for a certain purpose and, generally speaking, useless for anything else.

This is page 309 in my diary. I went to Haileybury more than fifty-five years ago, and found myself a member of a community of 505 boys, each of whom had a school number. Mine was 309. I have frequently bought a ticket with my school number in a Derby or Grand National Sweepstake, but never collected a prize out of it, so in allotting me the number of 309—which has rather a lucky appearance—the "book-room" authorities were not unconsciously doing me a good turn. No member of my family, with perhaps one exception, has had gamblers' luck, but I have had several friends and acquaintances who seemed to me fantastically lucky in games of chance and on the turf, though doubtless they made the most of their successes and were silent about their losses. A friend of mine

named Owen Pasha, who had many ups and downs, and more downs than ups, won the tenth part of the first prize in the Calcutta Sweepstake when he was a subaltern in India, and ever afterwards believed that if things went badly for him financially he could always correct misfortune by winning a sweepstake. In fact he never did, and was condemned to a penurious but not unhappy old age.

*April 8th*

Clarissa, who had made arrangements to leave when postal communications with England were due to close down, actually left to-day. She went by convoy to Haifa, via Jenin. The convoy found a bridge destroyed by Arabs on their route, but an armoured car led them by field tracks and side roads until they eventually rejoined the Haifa Road. She finally sailed from Haifa on April 10th. She left Jerusalem, where she has lived and worked for the past fourteen years, very reluctantly and will be greatly missed. Her house is being handed over to the landlord, and her furniture will be stored in the house of an Arab friend in the German Colony, where we hope it will be safe.<sup>1</sup>

*April 10th*

Two days ago Abdel Qader el Husseini, the Commander of the Arab forces in the Jerusalem area, was killed in action at Kastel, where there has been fighting for the last week. Abdel Qader had been away in Damascus, and immediately on his return went into the battle. He was killed while leading an attack. He was actually carrying explosives to blow up a position when he was brought down. It is said that the Haganá had news that he was there and were looking out for him. He was a stout-hearted fighting man and a good band-leader, but of course knew little about soldiering in the modern sense, though he took part in the Iraq campaign against us in '41. He had fought throughout the Arab rising from '36 to '39, and had been in exile ever since. He was previously a Government officer in the Land Settlement Department. Not many *effendis* in this country seem prepared to plunge into the rough-and-tumble of guerilla warfare, though I believe a good number would be ready to serve in a regular army, which needs less courage and initiative and is definitely more respectable.

<sup>1</sup> In the event it has all disappeared, apparently looted by Jewish refugees evacuated from the Old City about May 20th, 1948.

Abdel Qader has certainly earned a place in the Arab Valhalla. He had a big funeral yesterday, and it was anticipated that there might be a lot of trouble in the town. Word was sent round advising British officials not to go into the streets. I allowed all Arabs in the Municipality to attend the funeral, and in order to avoid the risk of being held up by mobs, the British staff went home about midday.

It appears that at the beginning of the funeral ceremony there was a sort of panic. Cannons were fired as a tribute to the dead leader when the coffin left his house. The crowd, many of whom were armed, did not know what the firing was about, and every man immediately discharged his weapon in the air. There were some ugly rushes and wave movements, during which a few people were trampled on and a few were wounded by bullets. Hundreds lost their tarboushes and keffiyehs. However, Jarallah informs me, after about ten minutes of promiscuous milling things became quiet, and the rest of the ceremony was carried out in good order. Abdel Qader was buried in the mosque area, near Moussa Kazim Pasha, his father. King Hussein is buried not far off, and also the Indian Moslem leader, Mohammed Aly.

To judge from the sound of distant cannon which was heard in Jerusalem throughout the night of the 9th, the battle at Kastel has been resumed.

On the 8th the water-supply pipeline was damaged by an explosion which blew up a culvert at km.22. The water supply was interrupted. I had an announcement made on the wireless advising people to use water as sparingly as possible. This advice was all the more timely as the weather was very hot, with a south-east wind, and the temptation to drink and bathe considerable. Repairs were nearly finished on the 8th, but were not completed yesterday, mainly because the Arab workmen insisted on being brought into Jerusalem to attend Abdel Qader's funeral. I am now anxiously awaiting news, because we had told the public there would be a normal water supply for to-day.

There was some rain early this morning and a terrific crash of thunder, which sounded like a thousand guns going off at the same moment. I was glad to hear the celestial artillery at full blast. By comparison the terrorist bombs sounded no more impressive than the back-firing of a car. This calls to my mind an indelicate story told me about 1906 by Colonel Fairholme,

then leader of the British detachment of Gendarmerie officers in Macedonia. He used to live with my uncle Bob,<sup>1</sup> whose vice-consul I was in 1905-6 at Salonica.

"Fairy's" story was that during the Austro-Prussian War in 1866 the commander of an Austrian corps was having a supper of stew and broad beans in an improvised mess near the scene of a recent engagement. The Prussians had withdrawn temporarily, but their cannon began to boom again before the General had finished his meal. The General was deaf, and paid no attention to the reports till his Chief of Staff said to him, "*Hören Sie nicht die Kanonen, Exzellenz?*" To which the old man replied "*Ach ja, die Bohnen. Die kann ich auch nicht vertragen.*"

To-day I called on Signor Silimbani, who has just received his exequatur as Consul-General of Italy, after having been vaguely called Italian Representative during the last few months. He is an attractive, agreeable Bolognese, and talks very good French, which suits me, as my Italian is becoming more and more elementary as I grow older.

He was a school friend of Ambassador Grandi, who is now in Portugal and not likely to be allowed to return to Italy for some time. Silimbani thinks Grandi an unusually able man and moderate in his outlook. In the early days of Fascism he apparently tried to keep Mussolini in the path of moderation. He said to him once, "You have broken the bank at Monte Carlo with a capital of 100 francs. If you have any sense you will now thank God and make friends with your neighbours."

Prospects of the Italian elections cause a good deal of anxiety. It appears that Nenni's Socialists will vote with Togliatti's Communists, but Saragat's party will not. The Christian Democrats are the largest individual political group, but there are a good many other anti-Communist groups, who will not, as they should, make common cause with de Gasperi. Silimbani says the average workman or peasant in Italy is very backward in political understanding and is easily led by able leaders like Togliatti, who promise them the land and the control of industry. Togliatti seems to have been twenty years in Moscow, where his son is held as a hostage.

The Italian Consulate has various headaches in Jerusalem. One of these is the custody of the Italian Hospital, which has been occupied by the British since 1940 and is now being

<sup>1</sup> The late Sir Robert Graves, K.C.M.G.

evacuated. Both the Jews and the Arabs want to occupy it, as it is a military vantage point. It is practically on the dividing line between the two areas, and it is obviously impossible to use it as a hospital at present. If it is taken as an advance post by Arabs or Jews it is almost certain to be blown up by the other side. No wonder the Consul-General hopes for an Angel in the Car from Lake Success.

I have recently been reading a book called "The Royal Dukes", by Roger Fulford, being all about Queen Victoria's wicked uncles. It is a most entertaining and illuminating work. The general ignorance about these Dukes which prevailed when I was a schoolboy was doubtless partly due to a conspiracy of silence designed to protect the Queen from profane comment. The "*bons bourgeois*", including the upper middle classes and some of the aristocracy, had a semi-religious veneration for the old lady, which was in some degree extended to the memory of the Prince Consort. Frankness in history, biography and novel-writing was a rarity in the 'nineties, which could hardly have produced such a book as "Eminent Victorians". The great public-school volunteer corps review held at Windsor about the time of the Diamond Jubilee opened the eyes of a good many British schoolboys to the fact that the Queen was something different from the saintly old lady who presided with dignity and benevolence over the destinies of her Empire. The sight of the glowering face of the Queen as she drove in her victoria down the long lines of schoolboy soldiers, who had been standing at the shoulder for about twenty minutes in the grilling sunshine, was a terrible disillusionment to many of us. The boy standing next to me fell flat on his face in a dead faint just as Her Majesty passed in front of us, but the Queen remained unmoved. Her scowl was not replaced by a look of concern. I suddenly realised that she was a tough customer and, as far as she was allowed to be, a tyrant.

That evening one of the boys in my House, who combined buffoonery with athletic prowess, did a very droll act, sitting, draped in towels, in a large basket, which was dragged round the dormitory by small boys. The expression on his face closely resembled that of our gracious Queen. Had I not been present at the review I should certainly have protested at this disloyal caricature. Having seen the "*vultus instantis tyrannae*", I made allowances for C. J.'s irreverence. As a matter of fact, when one



reads Fulford's chapters on the Dukes of York, Kent and Cumberland, who, with George IV, were the least creditable of the batch of six brothers, one realises how successful Victoria really was in her struggle against original sin and, incidentally, how much she must have been strengthened by her virtuous husband.

*April 15th*

The calendar of atrocities has been crowded lately. A few days ago the Irgun and Sternists attacked Deir Yassin, an Arab village on the outskirts of Jerusalem, which was reckoned to be safe from attack from the Jews on account of its good-neighbourly relations with them. Unlike most Arab villages in Jewish areas, it had not asked for any protection from the Arab Higher Executive. The terrorists apparently killed, in all, 254 men, women and children, and threw many bodies down a well. Other women were stripped naked and searched for money. When the news of the massacre arrived—and it certainly was a massacre, as the killing was not provoked by any resistance—M. de Reynier of the International Red Cross went to the village to establish the facts. Previously a Jewish police officer had been sent to the place and had reported that one Arab had been killed. M. de Reynier, who adopted a very reserved attitude, so as not to damage his relations with the belligerent parties, made no public declaration, but told Government, the A.H.E. and the Jewish Agency that large numbers of unarmed people of all ages and both sexes had been butchered. The Agency, as usual, repudiated the crime as unjustified and disfiguring to their cause, but took no action. Our security forces at the same time remained inactive long enough to let the terrorists clear off, thus missing a heaven-sent opportunity of getting their own back. Our inertia at this juncture was strongly criticised by the Arabs, but I am not quite certain of the facts, and must try to verify them.

On the 13th a convoy of buses carrying doctors, nurses and university personnel to Mt. Scopus was attacked on the road near Karm el Mufti by Arab gunmen entrenched nearby. Some of the buses were immobilised, and formed an easy target. Thirty-one<sup>1</sup> persons were killed, including Dr. H. Yaski, the Director of the Hadassah, and Professor Bonaventura of the University, the

<sup>1</sup> According to a later account more than double this number lost their lives.



head of the Cancer Research Department. Altogether nine members of the University staff were killed. I was lunching at the Eden Hotel on Monday, and at the next table were Yaski and his wife, both looking rather haggard. She, poor woman, was sitting next her husband when he was killed, and it is a wonder that she escaped. Some of the victims were burnt alive when the buses caught fire. The Jews say that we could and should have protected the convoy and that the intervention of the troops came very late. The Arabs say that but for our troops every occupant of the buses would have been killed.

Water difficulties during the past week have been aggravated by the fact that there has not been enough diesel oil available to keep the pumps going normally. Several districts have been short of water, and the General and the Chief Secretary have been sufferers. A new and serious complication has arisen out of the capture of Seriss by the Haganá, which has caused our Arab staff at the pumping-station to leave. Ghalib Hussein is going down to Seriss this morning to try to persuade these men to return to the station, but I anticipate that he will find them gone from the neighbourhood. If he fails to find them or to persuade them to return to duty, Jews already collected by Leibovitch will be available. The latter has a bad, feverish cold and has almost lost his voice. He has a most difficult and wearing job these days, and must have to answer at least a hundred telephone calls in the day. Luckily he is a cheerful, stout-hearted man with a strong sense of duty, and his optimism, which in normal times occasionally seems excessive, serves him well in a crisis like the present.

*April 17th*

I find that the shift who left Seriss yesterday and said they would not go back have now been persuaded to return with Ghalib Eff Hussein. They will have a military escort, and a splendid-looking young officer—in the Irish Guards, I think—has come to arrange about their transport. Ghalib Hussein is a member of the ubiquitous Hussein clan, with whom only the Dajanis can be compared, and seems to be a courageous and useful official. The Haganá have given a solemn promise not to interfere with the stations on the water-supply line or the personnel.

Last night there was a small party at Government House to meet Sir Hugh Dow, the first British Minister, who has just arrived. He has brought with him a Consul-General for Haifa and a Secretary of Legation. Two officials of the Palestine Government are being seconded to the F.O. service, and will remain with him. The Legation will be in the large building just opposite the Damascus Gate, which is at present the headquarters of the R.A.F. and was formerly the Secretariat. It looks to me very much in the line of fire.

Dow is a veteran of sixty-three, who has been Governor of Orissa, where he had to cope with a good deal of agitation and disorder—doubtless inferior in violence to Palestine standards. He has a smiling, tranquil face, and one hopes that he will be able to keep smiling.

Government House is getting no water, but H.E. was good enough not to make a grievance of it.

There was a broadcast last night about Government loans, defence bonds, bearer bonds and savings certificates. The decisions taken with regard to bearer bonds are not very encouraging to the bond-holders. H.M.G. will pass them on as a legacy to the successor Government, and will guarantee the payment of dividends and prizes and the eventual redemption at par of the numbers not previously drawn. It was stated that the bonds should consequently recover their value in the market: they are at present unsellable. But what if regular drawings do not take place? And what if the Palestine pound loses in value as compared with sterling! As prospects are at present I absolutely disbelieve in any drawings during the months immediately following the evacuation.

10.40 *p.m.*

Since 8.30 there has been a pandemonium of noise. It is not easy to judge precisely where the shooting is going on, but it sounds like a battle between Lower and Upper Katamon. There has been a lot of machine-gun fire, plenty of musketry, mortar bombs and ordinary bombs.

*April 18th*

The latest reports show that the casualties to the Hadassah convoy were heavier than was at first thought. The Jews accuse our troops bitterly of having done nothing to save the passengers

and drive off the attackers. They may be partly right, as the efforts of our soldiers and police have often seemed half-hearted. But, then, we are in the devil of a position, for if we invariably gave the aggressors hell when they broke the peace we should have many more murders of soldiers and civilians. Had we been tough from the outset we could probably have continued to be so without much risk, but, having indulged in violence during the early days, it is now clearly very difficult to react against it in the only manner which would be effective. One cannot envy the G.O.C.

The loss of life in the Hadassah convoy was much smaller than at Deir Yassin, but the quality destroyed was much more valuable. The Jews, in their horror at this incident, have already forgotten Deir Yassin, and the Arabs do not realise that the killing of unarmed doctors, nurses and university teachers was a dastardly outrage.

Generally speaking, the Jews are having the best of the military operations. The attack on Mishmar Haemek has been a failure, and the Arabs have retired after sustaining substantial losses. The Jews have got the Jaffa-Jerusalem road clear enough to bring in very large food convoys. One of these is said to have covered seventeen miles of road and arrived in Jerusalem, the Jews claim, without having a single shot fired at it. Since then more supplies have arrived. On the other hand, the effort of keeping the road open cannot be sustained continuously, as it entails the occupation by the Haganá of the hillsides all the way from Bab el Wad to Jerusalem and substantial control of the plain until the road enters the gorge.

I had meant to record that about a fortnight ago I was driving back with C. with a tin of butagaz from the Shell station when we had an encounter with a British policeman on a motorcycle. He was perfectly justified in stopping us, and threatening to run in Mohammed, who had driven straight across his bows as we came out of a side street. I apologised, and he said he would take no action this time. Just after he had gone on his way a small Arab boy who had witnessed the incident jumped on to our footboard and shouted gleefully, "*Don't worry! ma feesh mahakim—*" ("There are no law courts now"). This small episode makes one realise how general is the belief that the law can no longer be enforced.

I have had two farewell luncheon parties to bid good-bye to the senior officials of the Municipality. There had to be two parties, as there is no longer any common meeting-place for Jews and Arabs. If I could have brought them together, I believe they would have forgotten for the occasion their racial animosities and treated each other as friends.

*April 20th*

I am interesting myself in the fate of certain British Jews who are trying to leave the country. These are mainly elderly non-Zionists, who, if they remain, will only become "*des bouches inutiles*", and who seem to me to have a right to return to the country of their passport. With good-will and a modicum of resolution we could get all British Jews who want to leave Palestine out of the country. The Arabs ought to be ready to facilitate their departure, but I doubt if they will be.

It is said that Azzam is coming to Amman with Hadj Amin to plan the invasion of Palestine by the Arab Legion. The local Arabs have a touching faith in the legionaries, who have the reputation of being better soldiers than can be found in any of the Arab countries, but they are few in number, and certainly cannot take on the Jews single-handed.

It is reported that Emile Ghoury has been made C.-in-C. of Jerusalem to replace Abdul Qader Husseini. Ghoury is a typical *effendi*, opinionated and talkative, with nothing of the warrior in his make-up. He is the Mufti's blue-eyed boy, and consequently has a certain authority, but I cannot imagine anyone wanting to follow him in politics or in battle. He was an exile in Egypt during the early part of the war, but had no influence in the Egyptian political world and, though he was all the time plotting against Britain, he achieved nothing at all.

The statement that we are not only responsible for security but that we are effectively preserving it has been made so often recently at Westminster and Lake Success that truth-loving Britons in Palestine—of whom there are more than a handful—have become absolutely disgusted with the discrepancy between the claim and the facts.

Yesterday a Jewish doctor was kidnapped by Arabs just as he came out of Barclay's Bank, in the presence of seven British policemen. On the same day an attempt was made to grab my car, which my chauffeur managed to resist, and at about the

same time £18,000 in wages were stolen from a post-office messenger at the entrance to Barclay's, also under the eyes of the police.

This morning my car was really stolen—in Mamillah Road—with numbers of people looking on and municipal policemen a few yards away. It was on its way to fetch me, so I did not suffer the ignominy of having my conveyance stolen from under me, so to say. I think the thieves are common criminals, and not fighting men, and there is some possibility that we shall get it back. The Treasurer immediately reported the theft to the Arab National Committee, and they are hustling in search of it. We tactfully explained that it was the property of the Municipality, and that the Arab Chairman who succeeded me would want to use it.

The great difficulty about restoring law and order, whenever that gigantic task is attempted, will be to disarm the rabble. About three young men in every five are armed, and most of them don't trouble to conceal their weapons. The British police do not dare to take notice, and, indeed, disarmament could only be effected methodically by squads of at least a dozen tough chaps. The Arab police are indifferent.

If Jerusalem is to be a city-state there will have to be martial law for a month with drumhead courts-martial and unauthorised bearers of arms stood up against a wall and shot until these pests are rooted out. Unfortunately many of these robberies and shootings are done on the pretext of a patriotic or ideological motive, and the young men in the terrorist gangs on both sides, and some of those in the Haganá, have been persuaded by their leaders that robbery with violence and treacherous murder are justified in a good cause. Joe Stalin, when he was Joseph Djughashvili, set a very bad example by robbing banks and Imperial couriers in the Caucasus in the interest of the Socialist Party, and his subsequent success in life has persuaded many of his imitators that what was not wrong for the young Stalin is all right for them.

*April 25th*

The most important incident in the war during the past few days has been the occupation of almost the whole of Haifa by the Jews. In his report to the Secretary of State released by the Public Information Office, Sir Alan says, "The Jewish attack in Haifa was a direct consequence of continuous attacks by Arabs



on Jews in Haifa over the previous four days. The attack was carried out by the Haganá and there was no massacre. Approximate casualties according to H.E.'s report were fourteen Jews killed and forty wounded; 100 Arabs killed and 100 wounded." He adds, "As always, the Army is completely impartial and any suggestion that they are taking sides is not only untrue but is deeply resented." Things must have been very hot in the town for a while. The H.Q. of the Palestine Railways was destroyed by fire and there was other damage to buildings. It is said that a great many Arabs have left the town, and the Jews claim that all foreign Arabs have been thrown out, but that there are still 37,000 locals in residence. The Jews have set up a provisional government, and seem to have control over the whole town, barring the port.

A brother of my former chauffeur, Elias Kary, drove down from Jerusalem with his wife and four children in a taxi, which cost him £25. Two of the children were killed by flying bullets. The family were on their way to America. Elias and his family are aiming to go to Egypt from Gaza, whence there is an emergency bus service.

There is certainly a rush for the doors at present. My town clerk has already gone, and the remaining British staff of the Municipality will be flying to the U.K. on the 28th. I shall go by 'plane later on, but the date has not been disclosed to me—possibly it will be W day: the day of the final evacuation.

Government have instructed me to recognise—unofficially, so to speak—the new Jewish municipal committee appointed to look after the Jewish area, with Auster as chairman. Arrangements proposed at present and likely to be put into effect are: (1) to get the Commission to pass a resolution giving the power of signature at our end to the Treasurer and the acting head of department concerned and at the branch office to Auster and Boury; (2) to place all important archives, title-deeds, town-planning files, etc., in safe custody, preferably in a convent; (3) to divide between the two offices whatever cash remains after paying salaries for May and June—this is reasonable, as most of what will remain will be water deposits, belonging as much to the Jews as to the Arabs; (4) to leave water arrangements as they are and to hope that the supply will not be interfered with. Leibovitch is known to be a competent and fair-minded water manager, and Jemil, on the Arab side, is trusted.



It is possible that the Arabs will realise that they, too, will be greatly inconvenienced if the supply is cut. In this connection I forgot to record that at my last visit to the Arab National Council, when I had a conversation with Anwar Eff Nusseibeh, I pointed out that while attacks on the pipeline resulting in the interruption of the water supply would cause temporary hardship to the people of Jerusalem, the damage could be easily repaired. Destruction of plant in the pumping-stations would be quite another matter. If pumps and diesels were destroyed it might be two or three years before they could be replaced, and Jerusalem, with its present population, could not subsist for many weeks on cistern water. Moreover, electric light and power would cease after a fortnight. Nusseibeh seemed to understand the point of this, and I hope he got it across to the Arab commanders.

I discussed future arrangements with Auster two days ago. He is very friendly and easy to deal with, and I don't doubt that he will do a good job as mayor of the Jewish borough.

It was announced on the air yesterday that the Consuls of the U.S.A., France and Belgium were to implement, if they could, UNO's truce decree and report on the truce situation not later than April 27th. Strangely enough, though this news is authentic and officially put out by UNO, the gentlemen in question—Wasson, Neuville and Nieuwenhuys—have hitherto received no instructions from their Governments, and consequently cannot yet take any action.

I understand that as soon as they receive their orders they will seek an interview with the High Commissioner, and then visit the Arab Higher Executive and the Jewish Agency. It is long odds against their being able to persuade the belligerents to consent to a truce, as in each case the *conditio sine qua non* would be the abandonment or the maintenance of partition. If the Jews could get an undertaking that trusteeship meant trusteeship pending partition, they might play, but then the Arabs would not.

However, as the Arabs have had some hard knocks lately, they might be glad of an interval in which to lick their wounds and if possible stir up the waning enthusiasm of their brethren in the surrounding States. Nieuwenhuys told me this evening that volunteers for the Palestine Jihad are no longer forth-

coming and that the Arabs depend almost entirely on Abdallah's legionaries, who are efficient, but scanty in numbers. The Palestine Arabs, according to those who have seen them in action, are a disorganised rabble, "frantic and half-hearted", to quote from Mark Sykes's description of a neighbouring people in "Dar ul Islam". Needless to say, I am referring to their fighting men. One does not see many of their gentry in uniform or manning the barricades.

Reverting to the truce, I have advised N. to suggest to either party which may be ready to make a small temporary sacrifice to cease fire at a certain hour, and not to return fire for three days, unless what they regard as their territory is invaded. This could be done without any announcement until, say, the third day, when the side which had not ceased fire should be challenged to do so by UNO and by their adversary. If they refused, they would put themselves in the wrong, and the severest retaliation would be justified.

Faction seems to be attacking the Arabs. Food riots are reported from the Samaria triangle, of which Nablus is the capital, and the Iraqis at Jaffa have had an affray with the Palestine Arabs. Since then the IZL are reported to have attacked Jaffa in force, and the British, of course, are being blamed. Before I stop for to-day I must record the fact that the Arab section of the municipal fire-station has been looted and the engines and gear removed. I have advised Roy to set a few Arab houses on fire and see what the Arabs will do about it. It seems to me that the Arabs have a definite leaning towards anarchy, and that their lawlessness, disorderliness and lack of organisation may enable the Jews to perform a miracle and achieve a state of their own in Palestine.

#### *April 26th*

After a quiet night the atmosphere was very tense this morning, and there was some kind of a panic among the Arabs, who apprehend that the Jews may seize the fortress area at any moment and come down as far as Barclay's Bank, which would make our building quite untenable. I sent the Treasurer on a quest for accommodation for our archives and most important documents, and he succeeded in getting a couple of rooms in the Collège des Frères inside the New Gate, where they ought to be safe.

It would be more convenient if we could sort out the docu-

ments concerning the Jewish area and send them up to the branch office, but that is not possible, because our Arab staff would not co-operate, and roughs would probably attack anyone rash enough to undertake the transport.

The Arabs are deserting Baka'a. The Municipal Advocate is moving his family into the Greek Patriarchate, and the Treasurer is taking his mother and sister into a convent in the Old City.

The counters of the Migration Department, to which we have given some space in our building, are crowded with applicants for passports and visas. I had two applications for leave to-day, and expect many more. Arabs going north travel safely via Amman, and it is not impossible that the British rearguard will have to fly from some Transjordanian airfield. Hegarty, the Controller of Road Transport, leaves to-morrow, and has asked me to take over ten police cars for safe-keeping, but without responsibility if they are stolen. I shall try to get a couple of Arab national guards to look after them in our yard. Meantime one of them might well replace my stolen Austin.

To-day I was lent a copy of the *Times* of April 19th, and read, probably for the thirtieth time, the *in memoriam* notice of "George Gordon Noel, Lord Byron", which I fancy has been appearing every year since 1925. I wonder is there an endowment to cover the annual cost of this insertion. Another question: who started it and who keeps it up? And again, what possessed Sir Walter Scott to say "It is as if the sun had gone out"? One can easily imagine that the disappearance at an early age of such a brilliant, romantic and popular figure was a stunning blow to Byron's many admirers, but Scott's tribute seems, to say the least, excessive.

I have finished my introduction to the annual report of the Municipality, and hope to have the report typed and cyclo-styled before I go away.

*April 27th*

News comes that Denham, Chairman of the Housing Committee, was shot and killed by Arabs near the Sports Club last night. A friendly, amiable but solitary man who was always wandering round this big village alone. The murder of this harmless, elderly Englishman is another instance of the wide-

spread bloody-mindedness that present conditions have engendered.

I subsequently learnt that Denham had been in the habit of visiting the Jewish area, and no doubt it had come under suspicion by the Arabs, who find it difficult to believe that an Englishman can honestly be on good terms with both of the communities.

April 27th turned out to be my last day in the office. I had expected that at any moment armed Arabs might appear in the Municipality to tell the British staff that they were no longer wanted, and in order to prevent any disagreeable or humiliating incident I had sent messages to prominent Arabs asking them to give me notice in good time if they intended to take over the Municipal administration in the Arab area. Safieh, the Treasurer, who acted as my spokesman, assured me that for the time being there was no intention of grabbing the Municipal office or evicting me, and that I should be given notice of any move in that direction which might be contemplated.

However, my departure from Jerusalem was brought about by other causes. On the morning of the 27th, just after I had made my last entry in the diary, I went up to the Municipality at about 8.30 a.m., and noticed, before walking into the office, that there were a lot of rough-looking Arabs in the square, having a semi-military appearance. I supposed that they were guards sent up by the Arab National Committee, and hoped that their *raison d'être* was to see that attacks were not made on Barclay's Bank and their customers. Accordingly, I telephoned the National Committee to inform them that these persons were present in the square and to find out what they were doing there. The answer was that the Committee were interested, but that the competent official had not yet reached the office, so that they could not answer my question for the time being. About half-an-hour later shooting began in the square, consisting, to start with, of isolated shots, and working up to a deafening fusillade. When it died down a little I walked into the middle of my office to get a view of what was happening in the square. There I saw a crowd of forty or fifty people crouching or lying down just by the gateway of Barclay's—all obviously in terror of their lives. I noticed a nun, who looked as though she had been wounded, being dragged up the steps into the bank, and a few of the toughs whom I had seen on arrival hiding behind taxi-

cabs and shooting—as far as I could see—at the police, while two or three others were lying motionless on the ground, apparently dead.

I was thinking myself very lucky to have such a good view of the battle from the comparative safety, when I suddenly felt a sharp blow against my upper ribs in the region of my heart and, at the same time, noticed a hole in the window in front of me. My knowledge of anatomy is not very deep. However, I immediately assumed that I had been shot in the heart and would be dead in half a minute. After a few seconds I noticed that I felt perfectly well, that neither my feet nor head were affected, and so I took cover behind my desk, which is a very large and solid piece of furniture, and sat down to find out what damage, if any, I had suffered. Opening my waistcoat, I expected to find that my side was bathed in blood, and was astonished to see that my braces had been cut off, that there was a hole in my shirt and, as I discovered when taking off my coat, a hole through the back of my jacket, but no bloodshed, though afterwards I found that my chest had been grazed. There was also a hole in the wall where the bullet had gone through into the City Engineer's office. A really miraculous escape.

Not long before, the nuns at the Russian Convent had given me an illuminated picture of the Virgin and Child, which they begged me to keep in my pocket, as it would act as a talisman against danger. As a matter of curiosity I looked in my wallet to see if it was there, and found, indeed, that it was. This gave me an opportunity of ringing up the Abbess and expressing my gratitude.

When order appeared to have been restored outside I went out into the square to find out what it was all about, and more particularly to enquire why a bullet should have been fired through my window from a quarter in which there were no armed men except a bunch of British policemen. I complained to them of this unfriendly act, of which they disclaimed all knowledge, assuring me that they had not fired a single shot at our building. However, in the evening I saw a senior police officer, who told me that Arabs had fired at the police from a window on the upper floor of the Municipal offices, and that the police had returned the fire. I learned that the shooting had begun when Commander Leggatt, who had just arrived in Jerusalem on the staff of the prospective British Legation, came out of Barclay's Bank with a wad of notes, which he tossed into an

armoured car which was waiting for him. The Arabs, whose presence I had thought suspicious, immediately shoted "Ya-hudi," though Leggatt did not look anything like a Jew, and closed round him. Whether they shot him or whether he was killed by the fire of the police and soldiers is not, I believe, clear. But he was killed, and a very good man lost to Britain. A few of the ruffians who were responsible for his death also lost their lives. Leggatt had only been five days in Jerusalem.

My nerves were not affected by this incident, but I became convinced that there was no sense in remaining in Jerusalem any longer than was necessary, more particularly as all Britons had been strongly advised by the Foreign Office to take the earliest opportunity of leaving Palestine. I therefore consulted the District Commissioner, who said that it was obviously impossible for me to render any more useful service to the Municipality, as the machinery had broken down, and it would therefore be wise to go while the going was good. I was lucky enough to secure a seat in the 'plane for the following day, and was able to put my affairs—to some extent—in order before my departure, but had not the time to say good-bye to the many friends of both communities whom I was leaving in Jerusalem in the most unhappy situation.

Next morning we left Jerusalem in convoy at 6.30 a.m., and drove rather slowly down to Lydda airport through Ramleh and Latroun. The countryside was beautifully green after the late rains, and every available square yard on which corn could be grown was carrying a crop. There were a few road-blocks manned by armed Arab guards, who did not attempt to interfere with the convoy and greeted us cheerfully as we went through. Half-way to Ramallah I noticed a small detachment of Arab Legionaries with Glubb and a few other officers, who appeared to be making a reconnaissance. I could not help thinking that his position as a British officer commanding an Arab force at the moment engaged in a war, which could neither be called cold nor hot, with the Jews was rather ambiguous. But the anomalies of life in Palestine are too numerous to worry about.

We got to the airport by nine o'clock, and learnt that the place had been ransacked by the Jews a few days before and that it was difficult, if not impossible, at present to service large planes. Consequently, we were told that instead of flying direct to the United Kingdom in Skymasters, we should be flown in



batches to Fayed on the Suez Canal in a York. I was lucky enough to get off in the first batch, and within an hour we had got to Fayed. There we remained until 4.30 p.m., enjoying the tranquil atmosphere of the camp and feeling how strange it was to hear no rifle-firing, which in Jerusalem continued throughout the day at low pressure and at night at high.

The ninety or so persons who filled the three 'planes which took us home arrived at Heath Row the next morning worn and jaded, but thoroughly happy to be back in their own country. We were made much of by the journalists, who took a lot of photographs and made me broadcast. If I had known this was going to happen, I should have thought of something to say.

## THE POLITICAL ARGUMENT

THE EVENTS I have recorded in my diary make clear, if any evidence were needed, the force and depth of the conflicting aspirations of Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

The arguments advanced by both sides in defence of their cause have formed the subject of many books and thousands of newspaper articles, lectures, broadcasts and political speeches. The controversy between the two races has, moreover, enlisted the sympathies of countless foreigners, alien both to Jews and Arabs, and in some countries partisanship over Palestine has become a public inconvenience. Most, but not all, of the books dealing with this problem have been written by partisans, and it is not easy for persons seeking to understand the rights and wrongs of this controversy to find the claims of Arabs and Jews and the arguments which support them presented accurately and without bias. It is certain that no Jewish or Arab writers have yet made out a fair case for the other side, though Dr. Magnes has shown a sympathetic understanding of some aspect of the Arab case.

Many Jewish writers used to affirm that there was no real cause for hostility between the two peoples, and supported this theory by stories showing how much the good neighbourliness of Jewish settlements was appreciated by adjacent Arab villages. Recently Jewish politicians have been harping on the same note. They have repeatedly asserted that the Jews have no quarrel with the Arabs, but seem unable to understand that this proposition is not the same as to say that the Arabs have no quarrel with the Jews.

In order to understand adequately the nature of the conflict and to be able to assess the value of the arguments adduced by the contestants, it is essential to know something of the historical antecedents of the present situation in Palestine. It is not necessary to retrace the whole history of the Jews and their inextinguishable desire to return to the land in which their remote forbears lived and made history. The subject is obviously far beyond the scope of this book. Let me content myself with stating that, in the first place, since biblical times there have always been Jews living in Palestine, though they have

usually formed a negligible part of the population, and secondly, that the urge to come back to Jerusalem has been uninterrupted among the Jews of the Diaspora <sup>1</sup> at any rate since the Middle Ages. Until about eighty years ago the idea of a return to the land of Israel was rather a pious hope than a practical ambition. But in the early eighteen-seventies small batches of Jewish immigrants began to arrive from Russia, and during the following decades there was a slender but regular stream of immigrants, many of whom settled in most unpromising and unhealthy localities in northern and western Palestine, where their self-sacrificing perseverance, hardly surpassed by the efforts of any pioneers in the history of man, finally got the better of the marshes and sand-dunes, which they aimed to transform into fields and gardens.

Towards the end of the century Dr. Herzl, a Viennese journalist, conceived the idea of a home, and indeed a State, in which all Jews might congregate, manage their own affairs without interference and develop their national culture and genius. He instituted a campaign, and knocked at the doors of those States which, he supposed, might have territory to spare for the Jews. His attempt to secure from Sultan Abdul Hamid the cession of Palestine with a view to the establishment there of a Jewish republic met with a direct refusal, but the British Government in 1902 made him a tentative offer of land for the accommodation of a Jewish State in Uganda, including part of the territory now belonging to Kenya. This proposal appealed to Herzl at the outset, but he was soon dissuaded from accepting it by his fellow Zionists, who pointed out that the only country in which the Children of Israel could and should reconstitute themselves as a nation was the Land of Israel.<sup>2</sup>

Herzl died in 1904, but his successors never lost the hope of transmuting his "Alt-Neuland" from a dream into a reality. To-day his portrait hangs in all important Jewish buildings in Palestine, and every Jewish town or village has a Herzl Street. Zionist congresses were held annually, and encouragement was given by them and by the munificence of Baron Edmond de Rothschild to the settlers who were trickling into Palestine at the rate of a few hundreds each year.

<sup>1</sup> The Dispersion.

<sup>2</sup> I have often wondered if any of Herzl's friends added as a stiffening to the arguments of orthodox Zionism the reflection that, after all, Uganda is not a white man's country and that after three generations Jews living there might cease to reproduce themselves.

Then came the first German war, which, in a sense, provided Mr. Balfour and some of his colleagues in the Cabinet with a political reason for associating themselves in a practical manner with the aspirations of the Zionists. The motives which inspired the British Cabinet to issue the famous Balfour Declaration were mixed. It is now generally accepted that the Declaration was designed to predispose Jewish financiers all over the world in favour of the Allies; to incline public opinion in the United States, where Jewish citizens were numerous, towards intervention in the war against Germany; to reward Dr. Weizmann for his great services as a chemist to the Allied munition industry; and, finally, to provide the possibility of a solution to the problem of finding an asylum on other than charitable terms for the persecuted and unassimilated Jews of all nations, as well as for those who, while not unhappy in the countries of their residence, aspired to live in a Jewish community which could hope one day to control its own destinies. If this object could be achieved, not only would a great service have been rendered to the Jews throughout the world, but those nations which were from time to time embarrassed by an influx of Jews from areas of persecution would be able to anticipate that these periodical calls on their national hospitality would decrease, and might perhaps one day cease altogether.

The Balfour Declaration was addressed to Lord Rothschild, a leading member of the Jewish community in England, and not to the Zionist Executive, which was an international organisation without at that time international status. It may possibly have been the intention of the Cabinet to avoid direct contact with a body whose ambition was to establish a Jewish State in Palestine.

There has been much controversy over the question whether the Declaration conflicted with commitments made to the Arabs at a time when the British Government was endeavouring to persuade the Arabs of the Hedjaz to break away from their sovereign lords, the Turks. Arabs and pro-Arabs have frequently asserted that the McMahon-Hussein negotiations envisaged the creation of Arab States in all territories of the Turkish Empire predominantly inhabited by Arabs, and have ironically called Palestine "the twice-promised land". The British official view was that Palestine was in fact excluded from the territory reserved for the future Arab States.

The victories of Gaza, Beersheba and Megiddo secured the

occupation by British troops of the whole of Palestine and Transjordan, and during the course of 1918 a British administration was established in those territories. In that year Dr. Weizmann, the Zionist leader, visited the Emir Faisal, then Commander-in-Chief of the Arab forces, and discussed with him the aims and aspirations of the Jews in Palestine. Dr. Weizmann claims that his proposals were agreed to by the Emir, subject to the approval of his father, the Sherif of Mecca, later King Hussein of the Hedjaz. In one of the Jewish Agency's "Palestine Pamphlets" Dr. Weizmann states that in 1919 "a treaty of friendship was concluded between us in London embodying the main points of the conversations in the desert. Lawrence of Arabia helped in the drafting and negotiation of this treaty and acted as interpreter", and quotes two articles from the draft treaty signifying that Faisal accepted the British Government's declaration of November 2nd, 1917, and agreed that all measures should be taken to stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land.

At the same time the rights of Arab peasants and tenant-farmers should be protected, and their economic development assisted. This draft treaty, which could hardly have found favour with the indigenous Arabs of Palestine, was not implemented, and Faisal, afterwards King, first of Syria and then of Iraq, took no further part in moulding the political destinies of the Holy Land.

The Treaty of Versailles and the political code of the League of Nations had established the principle that territories conquered by the victors in the First World War were not to belong to the conquerors, but must be held in trust and administered under mandates granted by the League. However, before Great Britain had become the official mandatory for Palestine a British administration had been governing that country for four years. During that period the Jewish interpretation of the meaning of the Balfour Declaration and the significance of the term "national home" had tended to expand, and Jewish leaders had asserted that the intention of the Declaration was to make Palestine just as Jewish as America is American or England English.

The British Government in 1922 issued a White Paper tending to reassure the Arabs, whose anxiety over Jewish claims was natural enough. This White Paper, inspired by Mr. Churchill, then Colonial Secretary, referred to Jewish interpretations of the

Declaration as exaggerated, and reminded the Jews of their formerly expressed determination to live with the Arabs on terms of unity and respect and together with them turn the common home into a flourishing community, assuring to each of its members an undisturbed national development.

The political terms of the Mandate have given rise to considerable discussion. The Mandate adopts the phrase "Jewish National Home" from the Balfour Declaration, but without giving any specific sanction to the idea that the National Home was intended to pave the way to a Jewish National State. It has been maintained by the Jews, and contested by the Arabs, that the Mandate fixed no limit to the extent of Jewish immigration.

At the outset, at least, no serious restrictions on the immigration of Jews were imposed by the Palestine Government, though it was broadly laid down that workers might immigrate if it were shown that they were needed and that jobs were available, while intending immigrants under the capitalist quota must bring with them a specified sum of money which would guarantee their capacity to establish themselves as professional men, industrialists or farmers. In the early 'twenties the influx of immigrants was comparatively unimportant, and mainly of Eastern European provenance. It has often been stated that if the Jews had then been ready to come to Palestine in numbers comparable to those who actually came in the late 'twenties and throughout the 'thirties, they would have been able to establish, if not numerical superiority, such predominance in wealth and influence that the establishment of a Jewish State, or at least a bi-national State with equal representation of Jews and Arabs, would have appeared reasonable, and could have been effected without excessive opposition. As it was, Arab resistance to Zionism formulated its arguments at a time when the Arab population was vastly greater than the Jewish, and grew steadily as the number of Jewish immigrants increased.

Serious outbreaks of disorder occurred at intervals—notably in 1929, when 133 Jews and sixty-seven Arabs lost their lives—and were suppressed, not too harshly, by the Mandatory Power.

After the accession to power of the Nazis, with Hitler as Chancellor of the German Reich and leader of the nation, the persecution of Jews in Germany led to a new flood of immigration into Palestine, called by the Jews the *Aliya Hadasha*. Many of the new immigrants possessed capital, and among them were considerable numbers of persons possessing knowledge and



experience of industry. Meantime the settlement of Jews on the land as independent farmers or inhabitants of communal agricultural colonies was proceeding apace, and substantial areas of agricultural land were purchased by individual Jews and the Jewish National Fund from Arab landowners, who for the most part could not resist the high prices offered.

It must not be forgotten that modern Zionism has always been financed from abroad, and that without the very large contributions from well-wishers in Europe, America and South Africa, the Palestine experiment must have proceeded at a very much slower tempo, and probably on different lines. Wages and standards of living would have been lower among the immigrants and, incidentally, the advantages derived by the Arabs from the prosperity of their neighbours, both in respect of prices paid for their produce and the wage levels of their workmen, would have been less.

The effect on Arab opinion of the arrival of scores of thousands of immigrants from Germany was to precipitate an outbreak of violence directed partly against the Jewish intruders, as they were, of course, considered, and partly against the British guardians of the peace. The "troubles" started in 1936, and the operations of bands were accompanied by a general strike, which lasted for many months. The attitude of the Jews towards their Arab neighbours during most of the three years of disorder was marked by a great deal of restraint—"haflaga", as it was called in Hebrew—and in taking measures to protect their outlying settlements they often relied on technical assistance from the British, who first equipped the Haganá, or defence force, and made certain officers, one of whom was Major Orde Wingate, available to instruct the settlement guards in the art of irregular warfare. It was only in the final period of hostilities that bands of Jews began to indulge in terrorist activities.

The losses in life during what is usually called the Arab Rebellion were not important according to modern Palestinian standards, but an immense amount of inconvenience was caused and much money expended. It is believed that the heaviest casualties were those inflicted by Arabs on other Arabs for a variety of reasons. The aftermath of the vendettas occasioned by political differences during this period of violence was marked by the murder of various prominent persons, such as Fakhry Bey Nashashibi, and doubtless more blood will flow in pursuance of the feuds engendered at this time.

During the first twenty years of the British occupation several British commissions visited Palestine, the most important of which was the Royal Commission presided over by Lord Peel, which came to Palestine in November 1936. After a great deal of evidence had been heard, the Commission's report was issued in July 1937. It recommended the partition of Palestine into a Jewish State to be set up in Galilee and the Coastal Plain, excluding the south-western regions, and an enclave comprising Jerusalem and Bethlehem, with a corridor running down to the sea between Jaffa and Tel Aviv. The enclave and the corridor were to be placed under a permanent British mandate. The rest of the country was to be annexed to Transjordan. Proposals for the delimitation of the future frontiers were made by the "Woodhead Commission", which visited Palestine in 1938, but the general conclusions of this commission, which was far from being unanimous in its recommendations, were that partition was impracticable.

The British Government, in a statement of policy published along with the Peel Commission's report, had supported the Commission's recommendations, but did not put them into effect, and after a lull in the disorders, which synchronised approximately with the presence of the Royal Commission in Palestine, the Arab Rebellion broke out again. The British District Commissioner for Galilee was shot dead in front of the Anglican Church in Nazareth in September 1937, following which large numbers of Arab nationalist notables were arrested, and the Mufti of Jerusalem, Hadj Amin el Husseini, was deposed from his office as President of the Supreme Moslem Council and placed in detention. He subsequently succeeded in escaping to Syria. Irregular fighting was resumed in the hill country on an important scale, and severe measures were taken by the Government against the villages suspected of harbouring armed bands.

By the end of 1938 the views of the British Government regarding the possibility of implementing partition had suffered a radical change, and after separate discussions in London between the Government and Arab and Jewish delegations, who could not be induced to meet one another at a round-table conference, a new policy was decided upon and embodied in the White Paper of 1939.

In this instrument, after deciding that it was not part of British policy that a Jewish State should be set up in Palestine,

His Majesty's Government announced that their ultimate aim was to establish a State in which the two peoples in Palestine—the Arabs and the Jews—should share authority in such a way that the interests of each would be secured. At the same time they set a definite limit to Jewish immigration, fixing the final total of immigrants at 75,000 more than the numbers already admitted, unless the Arabs were eventually prepared to acquiesce in an extension of this total, and prohibited the purchase of land by Jews except in certain very limited areas.

The reaction of the Arabs to the White Paper was not as favourable as might have been expected, though not directly hostile. The Jews expressed the strongest opposition to the new policy, and threatened to refuse all co-operation with the Palestine Government, but eventually decided that the cost of such action in loss of contracts, replacement of Jewish Civil Servants by Arabs and other consequences would not be worth the gesture. Jewish extremists perpetrated a few outrages, and "illegal" immigration was organised more efficiently than ever before.

Meantime the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League discussed the new policy of the Mandatory Power, and concluded, by a majority of four votes to three, that the White Paper was inconsistent with the Mandate. Their resolution to this effect, together with the White Paper itself, was due for reference to the Council, but the second world war intervened, and the Council never met again.

During the first three years of the war Palestine enjoyed a greater degree of internal peace, and indeed of prosperity, than during almost any other period since the British conquest. It is true that the British forces which were maintained in the country through most of the war were strong enough to deal effectively with any disturbers of the peace, and this fact was doubtless realised by potential agitators, but the general spirit of the communities was favourable to the British war effort, and the Jews, at least, showed a strong desire to participate with us in the struggle against their arch-enemy. About 30,000<sup>1</sup> Jews enlisted in the British Navy, Army and Air Force, and the numbers might have been considerably greater had a Jewish division been formed at the outset and had more Jewish

<sup>1</sup> This has often been claimed as a high percentage of volunteers. It represents about 5 per cent of the population. But compare Eire, with a population of 2,900,000, of whom 240,000 joined the forces of their hereditary enemy.

recruits been admitted to the fighting units. The Arab contribution from Palestine was hardly a third of the Jewish, but no doubt the non-existence of any Arab authority comparable with the Jewish Agency was one reason for the paucity of Arab volunteers. Another was the fact that the Mufti had gone over to our enemies. In addition to the contribution of the Jews in military personnel, substantial quantities of war material of various sorts were manufactured by the Jews, and the supplies of bromine turned out by the Palestine Potash Company were invaluable.

Rashed Aly's *coup d'état* in Iraq, which included a massacre of Jews in Baghdad, did not arouse much sympathy among the Palestine Arabs, and King Abdallah's Arab Legion played an active part in its suppression, though, I believe, the Transjordan Frontier Force showed less enthusiasm about joining in the campaign.

The defeat of Rommel at Alamein and the failure of the Germans to exploit in Syria their victories in the Greek campaign secured the immunity of Palestine from invasion, which was a very real menace during the summer of 1941.

Meanwhile Zionist policy took a new orientation in what was known as the Biltmore Declaration, which claimed the whole of Palestine as a future Jewish State. This claim was not intended to embarrass the British Government in their conduct of the war against Hitler. It recorded an aim reserved for future realisation, and in fact collaboration by the Jews in the war effort in Palestine continued unabated.

However, the appalling mass-murders of Jews in Germany and Poland strengthened the whole of the Yishuv in their opposition to the immigration clauses of the White Paper, and the loss of the S.S. *Struma* with all hands accentuated their indignation at the refusal of Britain to grant asylum in Palestine to Jewish refugees. The extremists of the Yishuv, who had already at the end of the Arab rebellion formed themselves into terrorist organisations, started a campaign of murder and destruction in 1943, which continued with increasing force until the British evacuation in 1948, when this form of violence was transformed into organised civil war. Great damage was done to the railways and to other Government property, and many valuable British lives were lost. The difficulty of dealing with the terrorists lay in the fact that they were, generally speaking, not to be distinguished from the law-abiding citizens, and Britain's conscience refused to permit effective retaliation against the

majority for the crimes of what was, at first, a small minority of the Jewish population.

Towards the end of 1945 the British and United States Governments decided to appoint an Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry regarding the problems of European Jewry and Palestine. After visiting concentration camps and other places in Europe, where they examined the condition of Jewish survivors and noted that a large proportion of these desired nothing so much as to be allowed to go and settle in Palestine, the Committee arrived in Jerusalem early in March 1946. They heard numerous Arab and Jewish witnesses, and were supplied by the Palestine Government with two volumes of up-to-date information on the country and its administration. After three weeks in Palestine the Committee left for Switzerland, and concluded their report in which it was unanimously recommended that Palestine should not be either a Jewish or an Arab State, but eventually a Palestinian State, in which Jews, Moslems and Christians should have equal rights. They further advised that 100,000 Jewish refugees should be immediately admitted into Palestine. They considered that the Jewish Agency should co-operate in suppressing terrorism and preventing illegal immigration. The Mandate should eventually be converted into a trusteeship under the United Nations.

The recommendations of the Committee, which might have resulted at least in a temporary cessation of Jewish terrorism had they been accepted, did not bring about any immediate change of policy. Mr. Attlee declared that the Committee's proposals could not be put into effect before the Jewish illegal forces had been disarmed, and insisted further on an assurance of American military and financial support to make their execution possible.

The President, meanwhile, accepted the proposal for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish immigrants. This difference of viewpoint between the American and British Governments resulted in a continuance of the *status quo* and the revival of terrorism, which reached its climax when, on July 22nd, 1946, a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, which was used for offices by the Government Secretariat and the Army, was blown up, with the loss of ninety-five lives. Many of the victims were senior officials in the Civil Service, and the death-roll included numerous Arabs and Jews of both sexes.

This outrage, which was followed by others of lesser consequence, caused the authorities to tighten security measures,



and in the following winter Jerusalem, already a network of barbed wire, was divided into zones. The British Government later announced that the Palestine question would be submitted to UNO for a final solution, and the abandonment of the Mandate by Britain was foreshadowed. In the early summer of 1947 an international committee representing the United Nations visited Jerusalem, and, after hearing many Jewish but, owing to the Arab boycott, no Arab witnesses, recommended the partition of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish State. The rest of the story up to the end of April 1948 is contained in the diary transcribed in the previous chapters of this book.

It is obvious that the historical summary presented in the foregoing pages is superficial and imperfect, and the more so as it omits to deal with the valuable work of construction and civilisation effected by the Mandatory Power during the past thirty years. It would, of course, need a volume to do justice to the history of Palestine during the last half-century, but this short sketch, which, though guilty of many omissions, is not, I trust, factually inaccurate nor biased in its distribution of emphasis, will give uninstructed readers a notion of the sequence of events out of which the present situation has grown, and will remind others of much that limits of space have not permitted me to include.

When one turns to consider the arguments available to and employed by Jews and Arabs and their sympathisers in support of their respective causes, one is struck by the great superiority in number and variety of those adduced by the Jews to fortify their claim to a Jewish State in Palestine. The system whereby pros and cons are sometimes compared by being set forth in parallel columns, as was done by Morris Finsbury in "The Wrong Box", is not applicable to the Palestine controversy, in which a complex and lengthy series of pleas is found in juxtaposition to a simple proposition.

The Arab point of view is that at the time of the conquest of Palestine by Allenby the vast majority of the inhabitants were Arabs who had resided in the country without interruption since the Moslem conquest, and in the case of many of them since biblical times. They are, of course, obliged to admit that since the occupation of Syria, including Palestine, by Sultan Selim in 1517, their country was ruled by the Turks for four centuries, and that farther back in history parts of Palestine were in the possession of the Crusaders for nearly a hundred years. They



insist, however, that during the period of Turkish sovereignty the population remained what it always had been—namely, Arab—and that the comparatively few high Turkish officials, who directed a sort of colonial government, made no difference to the preponderantly Arab quality of the people. The great majority of the Arabs in all the Arab countries are Moslems, while a small but active and progressive minority are Christians. For both these communities in Palestine, and for Christians and Moslems throughout the whole world, Palestine is a Holy Land and Jerusalem a Holy City. For Moslems Jerusalem ranks third in the hierarchy of Islamic holy places, while Christians esteem Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth the holiest of their shrines.

The respect of Christians for the Holy Land did not, as we have seen, prevent a great Christian Government from proposing to create in that land a national home for the third, though the senior in age, of the "peoples of the Book". The Arabs of Palestine, and indeed the Arabs everywhere, have never recognised the right of Britain or the League of Nations to create a national home for a foreign race, as they consider the Jews, in Palestine. They resisted the intrusion, now by protests and now by violence, but the Arabs of Palestine, and indeed all Arabs except the inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, were to a greater or lesser extent under foreign domination during the years in which the Jewish national home was being established, and neither protests nor violence could stem the movement.

The White Paper of 1922 was designed to allay the fear of Arabs that Palestine was gradually going to be transformed into a Jewish country, but immigration continued, and the Arabs employed the processes of simple arithmetic to arrive at the conclusion that the influx of Jews would one day create a Jewish majority in their country.

Their apprehensions were increased by the rising aspirations of the Jews, whose leaders foretold the immigration of millions, and no longer hesitated to disclose their intention of setting up a sovereign Jewish State in Palestine. For some time after the British conquest it was generally believed by the British authorities and the majority of visitors to Palestine, but not by the Jews, that the country was incurably sterile and could not conveniently accommodate a population of much more than a million souls. If that theory had been correct, the Arab population, which was over half a million in 1920 and increasing considerably by the natural process of reproduction, would have

had only a limited cause for future anxiety; but every year more land was brought under cultivation by the Jews, and the views of responsible persons about the absorptive capacity of the Holy Land were changing all the time. The estimates of demographic experts—or persons who passed for experts—were constantly being surpassed by the reality as Jewish agriculture redeemed fresh areas of waste land and Jewish industry embarked on fresh and not unfruitful enterprises. It is no wonder that the prospects of Jewish expansion alarmed the Arabs in spite of their own rapidly increasing birth and survival rate.

The Arabs, then, have maintained, and continue to maintain, that Great Britain had no moral or legal right to establish a Jewish home in a country in which Arabs are indigenous and have formed almost the totality of the population for the past thirteen centuries, and that the League of Nations had no more justification in giving sanction to the British initiative.

The Arabs had no sovereign status either in Palestine or, at the time of the British occupation, anywhere else. It was not until many years later that Arab delegations could be sent to the meetings of the League. They had, therefore, to be content with unauthoritative protests, which gave place, as the situation worsened, to periodical outbursts of violence. In stressing the injustice done to them, the Arabs have claimed that for many centuries Jews migrating from Europe under the stress of persecution have obtained asylum in their countries, and that for the most part the Sephardi Jews have become completely acclimatised to life among Arab populations and have adopted Arabic as their home language. They have not been subjected to any interference in the matter of their religion, and have been allowed to pursue their trades and professions without hindrance. Generally speaking, their lot has been far happier than that of Jews living in Christian countries.

The Arabs further protest against the policy whereby nations disposing of huge tracts of sparsely populated but potentially fertile territory have planted in the smallest, and almost the most sacred section of the regions inhabited by Arabs, colonies of unassimilable Jews from northern and central Europe who threaten in time to outnumber the rightful owners of the country.

Such is the essence of the Arab case. A few supplementary arguments against Zionism and the Jewish National Home in Palestine are occasionally invoked, but the strength of the Arab

plea lies in its simplicity and the directness of its appeal to simple minds. It might have been presented with greater eloquence, with more logic and objectivity and with less animosity. Certainly the outbreaks of violence sometimes amounting to massacre with which they supported their appeals to justice alienated some sympathies in foreign countries, though for the most part human beings are still indulgent to those who die and kill for patriotic motives.

A line of argument never followed, or even suspected, by the Arabs is developed by my brother, Robert Graves, and reproduced in an appendix to this book. He endeavours to show that in fact Jehovah's promises to the seed of Ishmael were in certain respects more generous than those made to the children of Israel, and argues that UNO's award of territory to the Jews is contrary to the divine injunctions.<sup>1</sup>

The Jewish claims are not absolutely uniform, though the *fait accompli* of a Jewish State recognised by the United States and Russia, as well as by other less important nations, must have reduced almost to zero the number of Jews who would be satisfied with anything less than an independent State in the Holy Land. In the early days following the Balfour Declaration the Zionists were careful not to alarm the British or the Arabs by stressing their belief that the national home should or would develop into a national State. But the faith in that consummation was strong in the hearts of those who were engaged in building up the home despite the reticence imposed by political expediency.

When Transjordan, though included in the Mandate, was recognised as a separate entity from Palestine with a quasi independent Arab Government, many Zionists who had hoped one day to establish a Jewish State east and west of the Jordan and had expected to be allowed to found Jewish settlements under the National Home Scheme in Transjordan as well as Palestine suffered a severe disappointment. The irredentism—to apply the term by a sort of poetic extension to the idea of recovering land or property which you have never actually possessed—created by the exclusion of Transjordan from the

<sup>1</sup> It is a curious thing that three brothers of undiluted gentile extraction should have somehow become involved in the pervasive Jewish problem. It was, of course, Philip Graves who discovered the real source of the text of the "protocols of the Elders of Zion" and exploded the myth invented by the Tsarist secret political police in order to divert the attention of the Russian people from their own grievances and concentrate their fire on the Jews.

field of Jewish activity resulted in the formation of a political party, the New Zionists or Revisionists, originally led by Vladimir Jabotinsky, whose declared aim was to secure the whole of Palestine and Transjordan as a Jewish State.

The Revisionists—so called because they demanded the revision of the Mandate—were for years opposed to the more moderate policy of the Zionist Executive, and refused to recognise the authority of the Jewish Agency. It was commonly believed that the terrorist groups—the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Sternists—were a sort of militant wing of the party, and it became customary for the Palestine Police to arrest and detain revisionists whenever public insecurity demanded some wholesale action.

The recommendations of the Peel Commission in favour of partition naturally gave additional encouragement to the ambition of the great majority of Zionists to have a State of their own, nor did the policy inaugurated by the White Paper of 1939 diminish the determination of the Jews to secure their State. The effect, indeed, was contrariwise, because the provisions of the White Paper were declared by the Jews to be in conflict with those of the Mandate.

In 1942 the Zionist conference held at the Biltmore Hotel in New York demanded that Jewish immigration into Palestine should be continued under the control of the Jewish Agency, without restriction by the Mandatory, until the numbers of the Jewish population justified the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth. The Biltmore Declaration was endorsed by the Zionist General Council in Jerusalem, although it was opposed by the Aliya Hadasha and other groups that favoured at the time the creation of a bi-national State with equal representation of Jews and Arabs.

It is not suggested that the different claims of the Jews for a State in Palestine or, alternatively, for domination over the whole of Palestine, with or without Transjordan, are expressions of desire or ambition unsupported by argument. They do, in fact, rest on a multitude of such varied pleas that it would be impossible to do even scanty justice to them in the space at my disposal. They are generally held by the Arabs to be irrelevant and, indeed, from a purely legalistic point of view, the claim of the Zionists to establish themselves first as settlers and finally as owners in territory which has been the home and residence of another race for many centuries seems somehow inadmissible.

If we were dealing with a transaction between individuals, we might liken the situation of the Arabs to that of a house owner in whose house the authorities have billeted a number of strangers. After a few years the strangers claim that half, if not all, the house belongs to them, as they like it so much. This is, of course, an over-simplification of the case, but in the nature of things the argument carries conviction to the Arabs, and appeals to many non-Arabs who have not the time or the inclination to study the Jewish cause.

Some of the main arguments on which the Jewish case is based will now be mentioned with or without comment. It must be noted that all of these are not put forward by all the advocates. Some of them would be considered as heretical, and others as superfluous by different classes of Zionists, but the weight of the argument for a Jewish Palestine is made up by the sum total of the different arguments.

I do not propose to discuss the interpretation of the biblical texts containing Jehovah's promises of land in the now-debated territory to Abraham and his seed. It does not seem to be a matter of the first importance, unless one is an implicit believer in the divine inspiration of all the Bible, to obey the precise injunctions of texts which form part of a compilation of religious history and sacred law dating only from the seventh century B.C., or perhaps twelve centuries after the supposed date of the promises. This view will certainly not commend itself to orthodox Jews, but it does not aim to exclude from the arguments available to the Jewish cause those based on Old Testament promises or prophecies. All the interested parties—the Jews, the Christians and the Moslems—venerate the Old Testament, and though biblical precepts have, unfortunately, less force than ever in the conduct of human affairs, the statement that rights in the territory of Palestine have been reserved for the Jews by the highest Authority cannot just be ignored.

The historical argument which seeks to show that the Jews, as descendants of the Children of Israel, who ruled and possessed parts of Palestine and the present Transjordan for many centuries until the final destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 132, have a legal right now, after close on two thousand years of exile, to re-establish their home and their former kingdom in Palestine, is in itself only slightly more compelling than if a similar reasoning were used to support the claim for the right of wholesale immigration of Italians into England. That aspect of



the Jewish claim has received undue consideration from the fact that the Jewish connection with Palestine is perfectly familiar to many millions of Christians brought up on Bible history, to whom the history of Palestine between, let us say, 33 A.D. and the Balfour Declaration is practically unknown.

It has been mentioned that the Balfour Declaration was to some extent inspired by the desire to gain the support of world Jewry during the war of 1914-18. The effect of the Declaration was certainly as favourable as was anticipated. It is true that this circumstance, far from consoling the Palestine Arabs for the encroachment on their homeland, was calculated to prejudice them both against the Jews and their benefactors, but the Jews can hardly be blamed for considering their own interests in preference to those of the people at whose expense they were to benefit. Moreover, they could hardly avoid the conclusion that the support of Britain, America, and finally the League of Nations, gave some added moral sanction to their political creed.

The other motive for the Declaration was consonant with the long-term aspirations of the Zionists. The latter had realised, with Herzl and before Herzl, that the Jews of the Diaspora would never be safe from persecution and discrimination in most of the lands in which they had settled, while in those countries where they were treated with tolerance and hospitality they ran the risk of assimilation, conversion and eventual loss of identity. It was therefore necessary for them to have a land of their own, and the more their own that land was, the greater was the hope for Jews all over the world. In times of distress they could come to that land, as far as it could contain them, and at all times they could look to it as the central meeting-ground of their race, who at last would have a country. It was also to be expected that the Gentiles would look on the Jews with more respect and toleration when they were no longer homeless, and when a Jewish authority representing the Jewish homeland could protect and care for Jewish citizens abroad and appeal to any world organisation to protect Jewish minorities in foreign countries. This last aspiration would fall short of fulfilment as long as the Jewish home was in another man's country. To make the home a real one, the Jews must have sovereign rights over it.

We have now reached the point in this controversy where it becomes necessary to weigh two injustices one against the other



—an act of aggression, a tort in common law at the least, if not a crime, against the secular hardships and injustices suffered by the Jewish people throughout history at the hands of non-Jews, and more particularly during the dozen years of Hitler's domination of Germany and Central Europe, when a cold-blooded attempt to extirpate a whole race of human beings was nearly successful and five-sixths of the Jews of central Europe were destroyed. It is unfortunate that the antithesis is not logical, in that it is not historically true to say that the Arabs have treated the Jews oppressively or unjustly. Nevertheless, the Jews maintain that the world as a whole owes them a country both for their own and the general good, and that their need and the world's advantage are to be preferred over the territorial rights of the Palestine Arabs. The Peel Commission and the Assembly of the United Nations admitted the validity of this pleading, though fully aware of the Arab position, and it is not too much to say that it has become the mainspring of the Jewish national movement.

At certain moments in history dynamic movements occur, which cannot be checked by logic, convention or even the ordinary process of law. They are usually conducted with such enthusiasm and such conviction that they succeed in snatching success against overwhelming odds. The Zionist urge to possess their own home and State in Palestine is such a movement. It is not, in essence, as strongly based on justice as the Italian Risorgimento or the Czechoslovak, Irish or Greek national movements, in which the native populations fought for the right to be free and independent in the homes in which they had always lived, but it partakes of the same nature, and looks like succeeding, as those movements did. Zionist leaders and propagandists have done their work well, and it is quite a rarity to-day to find a Jew in Palestine who does not believe that he is in his rightful home. "Returning to the homeland" was a phrase constantly on the lips of Jewish witnesses before the different commissions and committees who have visited Palestine, and one may compare this naive but sincere claim to the inscription "Eretz Israel" on the postage stamps.

Alongside the proposition that the Jewish claim is just because its fulfilment is absolutely necessary for the race, it is asserted with conviction, and with some justice, that land formerly sterile and uncultivable which has been reclaimed and made fertile at great sacrifice should rightfully belong to those who have

reclaimed it, especially when, in addition to their blood and sweat, they have paid good money for it. There are those who believe that landowners who do nothing to fertilise their land have no just cause of complaint if it is taken from them and entrusted to persons able and willing to exploit its natural riches. Modern trends in many countries give some sort of sanction to this theory. The Jews are fully entitled to use this argument, and are not backward in doing so.

It has often been debated whether authorities responsible for the Balfour Declaration anticipated that there would one day be a Jewish majority in Palestine. The text seems to imply that this was so. It runs as follows: "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in other countries."

These words, which are repeated in the preamble to the Mandate, would seem better devised for the protection of a minority than a majority. They have often been criticised by Arabs and Englishmen for the strangely slighting manner in which they refer to the indigenous population of Palestine, for which no better term could, it seems, be found than non-Jewish.

An argument which has been much used by the Jews in recent years has been that which points out that the Arabs have acquired independence and vast territories as a reward for the active participation of the Hedjaz and the accommodating attitude of Egypt during the First World War. It is suggested that a people—to call the Arabs one people for the sake of this argument—who have benefited so tremendously as a result of minor exertions and insignificant sacrifices might be ready to make a generous gesture to their fellow Semites and grant them the ownership of a small part of their huge and unexpected inheritance.

Unfortunately, Palestine is the cradle of Christianity, and one of the holiest lands of Islam. The holy places could never be ceded to the Jews either by Moslems or Christians, and the Palestine Arabs, who could see no sense in surrendering territory to the Jews when the Jewish population was small, were later no more inclined to the policy of squeezing themselves into corners

of Palestine or out of the country altogether when the immigrants became numerous.

A world authority might have been able arbitrarily to remove the Arabs from Galilee and the coastal plain to fertile lands in Syria and Transjordan, but it is early days to talk of a world authority capable of drastic if beneficent action. The United Nations have been unable to prevent the partial destruction of Jerusalem, and until they dispose of sufficient force to carry out their decisions they might almost as well be non-existent.

I have no space to deal with the remaining arguments by which Jews seek to justify their claim to all or part of Palestine, but I cannot help agreeing with them in thinking that it is unreasonable to expect that a progressive, industrious and well-organised minority containing about 40 per cent of the whole population of the country should be permanently dominated by a majority inferior to them in energy, education and administrative experience. Such an arrangement simply would not work.

An alternative, now no longer available, would have been for Britain to have worked from the outset for the creation of a bi-national State with equal representation, whatever the numbers of the component communities, and no restrictions in respect of immigration.

The situation has been radically altered by the results of the Arab-Jewish war, and the Jews will not be slow to add one more argument—and a more forceful one—to their armoury: namely, the right of the conqueror to keep what he holds.

## PEACE PROJECT FOR JERUSALEM

DURING THE PAST three months hundreds of people have been killed or injured in Jerusalem in a species of warfare devoid of rules and humanity. Many more have lost property or their livelihood. Nobody has gained anything, and no good can possibly come to either side from the continuance of strife and bloodshed in the city.

The vast majority of the inhabitants desire to live in peace and to be freed from the increasing dangers of communal disorders. They recognise that while there must be political disagreements, these can never be solved by violence, and that if the life of the city is to survive, some *modus vivendi* must be found to enable the two communities to live together until their political relationship can be permanently settled.

For this purpose I ask that both Communities should henceforth conscientiously observe a truce of God and the following rules of conduct:—

(a) Each Community should for the time being restrict the movement of its members to its own areas which will be policed by its own members of the Municipal Police Force.

(b) Each Community should solemnly undertake not to attack the other by sending armed men into the Community's area or by firing from one area into another.

(c) Each Community should bind itself to exercise the utmost self-restraint, and control the violent elements in its midst.

(d) Each Community should refrain from retaliation and reprisals which can only make it more difficult for the leaders of either Community to prevent further attacks and counter-reprisals. This recommendation is the most difficult of fulfilment, but it is the most important of all.

(e) Each Community should fully respect all vehicles carrying the Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Shield, and should undertake that any such vehicle would not be used for any purpose not authorised by these signs.

(f) Passage by members of one Community through the territory of the other would be permitted in the case of funeral

parties or revictualling parties under a flag of truce. A minimum number of omnibuses should be permitted to operate.

(g) No armed men should be permitted to live within any area reserved for the other Community.

(h) All armed men should leave the portion of the Old City occupied by Orthodox Jews, whose safety would be guaranteed by the Arabs if this was done, and the Old Montefiore quarter should be similarly evacuated by all armed men and placed under the protection of British forces and the Municipality.

This appeal has the support and goodwill of all the people of Jerusalem except those who are determined to submerge this sacred city in chaos and bloodshed for political ends.

If these rules of conduct are observed, peace, if not at first goodwill, will be restored, and the life of this city, so often destroyed in the past, will be able to continue.

R. M. GRAVES.

*February 28th, 1948.*

## SOVEREIGN RIGHTS IN PALESTINE

BY ROBERT GRAVES

THE PARTITION OF Palestine into Arab and Jewish States, which has been recommended by experts in ethnography as a compromise between the conflicting claims of the Jewish and Arab residents, cannot be justified by appeal to any local tradition.

The historical facts are not in dispute. During the First World War the British promised the Jews a national home in Palestine in recognition of their help against the Germans and the Ottoman Turks; but this promise was not meant to deprive the Palestinian Arabs of any rights that they had enjoyed under Turkish rule. In the last year of the war, General Allenby's forces, with armed Arab help on their desert flank, defeated the Turks at Gaza and occupied all Palestine. At the Peace Conference the British expressed their readiness to govern Palestine under a Mandate from the League of Nations. This was subsequently granted. Meanwhile Arab States were set up in the east, south and north. The persecution of the central European Jews led to an unexpected influx of immigrants into Palestine, which greatly complicated the task of the Mandatory Power. The League of Nations perished and, because of the difficulty of fulfilling their too loosely worded promise to the Jews without antagonising the local Arabs and Arabs all over the world, the British have since decided to leave Palestine, charging the United Nations with the task of settling the question of its future government.

There are no modern title-deeds to Palestine except the Mandate which the British are now surrendering. They seized the country from the Turks, who had seized it from the Arabs, who had seized it from the Crusaders, who had seized it from the Arabs, who had seized it from the Romans, who had seized it from the Jews, who had seized it from the Canaanites, Perizzites, Philistines and others. But Arabs, Jews and Christians still agree to venerate as divinely imposed the Five Books of Moses, in which the only ancient rulings on the question of sovereign rights in the "Promised Land" are clearly recorded.



These rulings cannot be dismissed as being of merely anti-quarian interest; and this is proved by the strength of the Zionist movement, but for which it would have been possible to provide the Jews with a national home in East Africa, Brazil, Madagascar, British Guiana or some other place where they would meet with no serious opposition from the local inhabitants. They insist on Palestine or nothing. The Canaanites, Perizzites, Philistines, Romans and Crusaders have all perished: only they and the Arabs survive as contestants for the country.

A strange aspect of the case is that no expert seems to have taken the trouble to find out what the Promised Land was, to whom it was promised and on what conditions. Even the Chief Rabbi, in a recent letter to *The Times* about Jehovah's promises, presented the Jewish claims in vague and inaccurate terms.

The relevant texts are as follows:—

*Genesis xii. 7.*

Abraham coming down south from Haran on the Upper Euphrates is promised the region about Shechem (Nablus) for his seed in general without condition. The region is not defined except as being then occupied by Canaanites and Perizzites.

*Genesis xiii. 15.*

Abraham amicably resigns the eastern part of this region to Lot, ancestor of the Moabites and Ammonites.

*Genesis xv. 18.*

Abraham is promised for his seed in general all the territory between the Torrent of Egypt (near Gaza) and the Euphrates, including the whole land of Canaan defined in Genesis x. 19 as extending from Sidon to Gaza and the Red Sea.

*Genesis xvii. 8.*

Abraham is promised for his seed in general, for ever, all the Land of Canaan; the one condition being that they should worship God alone and practise circumcision. Circumcision would constitute their title-deeds to the land.

*Genesis xxvi. 4.*

This promise is renewed to Isaac, Abraham's second son, though not, as it appears later, to the prejudice of Abraham's descendants by Hagar—the Ishmaelites—or of his descendants

by Keturah—the Midianites—or of his other descendants by unknown mothers, such as the Spartans, whose surprising claim to be descended from Abraham was confirmed by a treaty with the Jews in the time of the Maccabees; or of Lot's descendants, Ammon and Moab, to whom Abraham had resigned a part of his claims.

*Exodus xxiii. 31.*

The Israelites descended from Isaac through Jacob are promised a national home in the same large territory; but on condition that they gradually but effectively expel all the occupants who are not descended from Abraham or Lot, and make no treaty with them.

*Numbers xxxiv. 1.*

The Israelites are ordered to occupy a part of Canaan, including Philistia and part of Transjordan, but to leave the Midianites, Ammonites, Moabites, etc., and their cousins, the Edomites (sons of Esau, Jacob's elder brother), in possession of their tribal lands. That these instructions, which were implemented by invasion and the exact division of the conquered territory among the twelve tribes, were made without prejudice to the larger promise made in Exodus xxiii. 31 is proved by its repetition in Deuteronomy i. 7 and xi. 22.

But in the latter text a further condition is attached to the promise: that Israel should keep the Mosaic Law. It is not generally realised that Moses died within the Promised Land, though in territory ceded by Abraham to Lot.

The Israelites did not fulfil the condition attached to the promise of Exodus xxiii. 31. This is stated in Joshua xv. 63, xvi. 10, etc. Nor did they fulfil the condition attached to the promise in Deuteronomy xi. 22. This is stated *passim* in Kings, Chronicles and the Prophets. They disobeyed the Law and followed strange gods, with the well-known sequel of the two captivities, that of the Northern Kingdom and that of the Southern. The Northern exiles never repented, never returned, disappeared from history. Cushite and Cyprian colonies were planted in their chief cities, and their inheritance therefore reverted to other descendants of Abraham in common by virtue of the promise made in Genesis xvii. 4. But the Southern exiles did repent, did return, renewed possession of their allotted territory and made no claim to sovereignty over the lands of the

North. The Jewish faith takes its name from the Southern tribe of Judah, to which was attached the small but regal tribe of Benjamin, and a few small Levite and Simeonite enclaves. The tribal territories are clearly defined in Joshua xv. and xviii. The case is not affected by temporary extensions of Judæan territory under bellicose Maccabee kings or by the Roman grant, first to Herod the Great, an Edomite, and later to his grandson, Herod Agrippa, of the title "King of the Jews" with sovereignty over all the original Land of Canaan.

In so far as the Jews are still faithful to the Mosaic Law, which they re-edited during the Captivity, made distinctively Judaic and communicated freely to the new inhabitants of the North, the Pentateuch allows them to claim sovereign rights in these Southern territories, but in these only. On the other hand, since they did not originally expel the Jebusites from Jerusalem, they should be prepared, if they ever resume this sovereignty, to tolerate the continued presence in Judæa of other non-Jewish peoples.

As for the rest of Palestine, it is at present occupied partly by Jews, partly by Arabs, partly by a "mixed multitude" of other peoples. The case is complicated by the application of the term "Arabs", which really means nomads, to all Moslems settled in Palestine and Syria; and the application of the term Jews, which really means "members of the Tribe of Judah", to all members of the Judaistic faith. The fact is that the Northern Exile was not a wholesale one. Many pure-bred Northern tribesmen figure in later Jewish history; a familiar example is the prophetess Hanna in Luke ii. 36, who was of the tribe of Assher. They were perhaps descended from pre-Exilic Northern colonists in Egypt, Syria and elsewhere. Moreover, the bulk of the common people were not carried off from Northern territory, but merely lost their tribal identity and, like their new Cushite and Cyprian neighbours, the Samaritans, were converted a century or so later to the law of Moses as communicated to them by the returned Southern exiles. Of Jesus's disciples, all Jews by religion, only one—Judas of Cherioth—is known to have been a Judæan. Another—Matthew—was a Levite, but the rest were Galileans, doubtless of mixed ancestry, but proud of their descent from the original Northern peasantry.

The Moslem Arabs, who invaded Palestine, tolerated Judaism as a cult from which Mohammed had borrowed much of his doctrine; but Roman persecution of the Jews in the second

century A.D., and the setting up of a temple of Jupiter on the site of the Temple, had long forced the Palestinian peasantry to abandon the Mosaic Law, and most of them now became converts to Islam.

Thus the Palestinian "Arabs" are partly of ancient Israelite stock, and in so far as they are genuinely Arab, can claim to be for the most part Sons of Abraham and Lot, immigrants, not from Southern Arabia, but from the border lands of Palestine; and, being Moslems, they practise circumcision and worship the God of Abraham. Therefore they have as much right in Northern Palestine as the Jews (who, though also of mixed race, are on the whole of Judæan ancestry), because the promise of Genesis xvii. 4 was made before the promulgation of the Mosaic Law, which conditioned the promise of Deuteronomy xi. 22. And though they cannot claim sovereignty rights in any particular district of Palestine, they are senior in genealogy to the Jews and entitled to at least as much power in the government. (It is not stated in Genesis that Abraham was older than his brother Haran, Lot's grandfather; he may have been younger; certainly Isaac was junior to Ishmael and Jacob to Esau and Judah to his Transjordanian brother Reuben.) On the other hand, the Jews, as circumcised Sons of Abraham, have a right to enter Northern Palestine freely, so long as they do not evict any other Sons of Abraham already in possession or claim sovereign rights there.

The proposed partition of Palestine is to be made in almost exactly the contrary sense to Jehovah's intentions. The Jews are to be given a great stretch of the rich Northern territory, but refused the poorer South. This is like allowing a man to enclose a common in which he has no better rights than his neighbours, while withholding from him the family mansion which is entailed on him. The Arabs threaten to fight, because they believe that once the Jews possess sovereign rights in the North they will consolidate themselves there and presently move south.

This is a reasonable view. The Jews have expanded Hebrew, which had become a purely literary language, into a living vernacular, which the second generation of Palestine Jews speak as a mother tongue. Jehovah is still, or once again, their national God.

## APPENDIX C

### A SAMPLE OF TERRORIST LITERATURE

I DO NOT RECOLLECT seeing any examples of terrorist literature in print, and feel that many readers would be interested to read the two specimens given below. They were sent to me and to several other Englishmen occupying public positions by the Irgun. The first purports to be an account of an interview between Judge Sandstroem, Chairman of the UNO Committee of Enquiry, which visited Palestine during the summer of 1947, and the officer commanding the Irgun. Judge Sandstroem was naturally reticent about his contact with the terrorist general, and it is conceivable that this interview never took place. From internal evidence, however, I am pretty sure that the conversation reported in this appendix is authentic, though a good number of the statements made by Menahem Beigin, or whoever represented the Irgun at the meeting, are unfounded.

The hostility to Britain expressed at the interview and manifest in every line of the broadcast (Appendix C (II)) are characteristic of the attitude of the Irgun and the Stern Gang. The hatred which pulses through the whole being of these sanguinary but efficient creatures will be a great handicap to peaceable constructive action in the new State of Israel.

#### I

Report of Conference between Representatives  
of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine  
and  
the Commander and Two Other Representatives of the  
Irgun Zvai Leumi.

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The conference took place on Tuesday, June 24th, 1947, eight days after the arrival of the Committee in Palestine. The UNO Committee was represented by the Chairman, Mr. E. Sandstrom, Dr. Victor Hoo and Dr. Ralph Bunche.

This report, prepared in the first place by a UNO representative, has been passed by both parties.

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The Commander inquired about Lisicky, whom he had expected to be along, and the Chairman explained that he had

received word about Lisicky's inclusion in the group only that afternoon, and it was too late for him to take any action upon it, or even to inform Lisicky.

The Commander sat at the head of the table, with his two colleagues on one side with their backs to the window, facing Mr. Sandstrom, who was flanked by Hoo and Bunche. Mr. Sandstrom began the discussion with the statement that the essential condition for the talk was that nothing should be released on this meeting during the period of the Committee's stay in Palestine. The Commander readily agreed to this.

The Commander then stated that first of all he wished to thank the Committee for the action taken with regard to the sentences imposed on the three members of his organisation "by the so-called Military Court". He and his organisation, he said, had no illusions as to the outcome, but they appreciated the action of the Committee, the more so in view of the acceptance by the Committee of the interpretation of the UN Assembly's resolution, put forward in Irgun's letter, as obliging the British to refrain from the use or the threat of force.

Mr. Sandstrom then inquired as to the aims of the Irgun organisation and the position which the Commander held in it, or rather, the authority with which he could speak for it.

The Commander stated the Irgun Zvai Leumi means "national military organisation". It was organised some ten years ago. Its object is to bring about the liberation of the country from the foreign yoke, the attainment of freedom for the Jewish people and the restoration of Jewish rule in Eretz Israel. Before the war the Irgun had defended the Jewish people against the organised attacks of Arab groups which were instigated by the British rulers. It had also brought thousands of Jewish repatriates into the country as a major task of saving them from an unbearable future in Europe.

On the outbreak of the war against Hitler, the Irgun recognised the war as a war of all peoples against Nazism. The Irgun realised that Hitler meant his pronouncement concerning the destruction of Jews. For some years, therefore, the organisation undertook no offensive measures in this country because of the danger facing Palestine from the Nazi aggression. The organisation was kept intact, however. Some members entered various Allied Armies, others continued underground organisation work.

In the last months of 1943 and the first months of 1944 it



became obvious that all the sacrifices of the Jewish people on the battlefields of the war would be in vain, and that Jews in Palestine would be left under oppressive rule with no opportunity to bring back those who would wish to return to their Homeland.

Consequently, Irgun issued the declaration of November or December 1943 to the effect that there would be no more interruptions in its fighting for freedom. News had also come from Europe at the time, although it was unconfirmed, that the mass slaughter of Jews in Europe had begun in an unprecedented way. Irgun then began operations which concentrated on the local Government without harming the concentrations of troops in the country, since it was necessary not to endanger the fight against Hitler.

It was then proclaimed that Irgun's aim was Hebrew rule in Palestine and that Irgun would fight until that objective is achieved.

Following their proclamation, the operations which Irgun carried out were sometimes large and sometimes limited in scope. This stage of its activity continued for nearly two years.

In the meantime the British Occupation regime continued to keep the doors shut against the Jews, even after they were fully aware of the process of slaughter of Jews which was going on in Europe. The British continued to sabotage every effort in Europe to save the Jews. The Commander cited as one example the fact that it would have been possible to save the Jews in Hungary before it was completely overrun by the Hitler legions. Turkey, he said, was prepared to give transit visas to Palestine, but all efforts in this direction proved to be in vain, since the British refused such people admittance, even though this refusal meant certain death for them.

Thus Irgun continued its struggle. The British tried to overcome resistance with the aid of organised Jewish groups, including the Jewish Agency. Some Jewish bodies handed over to the authorities Jews suspected of aiding Irgun.

The British used the so-called Emergency Regulations which had been promulgated in 1936 and 1937. In their effort to break the spirit of the Jewish people in Palestine, he said, they arrested people whom they claimed to suspect of Irgun affiliations, and put them in concentration camps. Some three hundred of them, alleged the Commander, had been deported to a concentration camp in Eritrea. He emphasised that these

were all alleged suspects, that no charges had been placed against them.

At this point the Commander referred to the letter from the Irgun organisation which the Committee had received to-day requesting the Committee to call on three of the Irgun members now imprisoned at Acre as witnesses of the maltreatment of political prisoners by the British authorities.

He cited the example of the seventeen-year-old youth who in 1944 at Haifa had been shot in the leg for posting Irgun posters. Instead of being put in a hospital, the Commander alleged, this youth had been transferred to the Acre Prison, had been given no medical treatment, and for three days and three nights been chained to the cot in his cell, during which period his open wound became infected. The youth's leg later had to be amputated, and he subsequently died. This, the Commander observed, was only one of many such cases of barbaric behaviour which he described as "an intolerable crime". A wounded man, he said, whoever he is, has the right to medical treatment, and whoever withholds such treatment is a barbarian.

Continuing with his historical narrative, the Commander stated that when peace came and the elections were held in England and a new government of the Labour Party came into being, the Jewish Agency leaders and their supporters in Palestine had expected a change. He recalled that two months before the election a conference of the Labour Party in England had been held, at which Mr. Dalton, who is now Chancellor of the Exchequer, had said publicly that when Labour came into power it would do all in its power to bring about a happy and prosperous Jewish State in Palestine. Again, continued the Commander, one year earlier the Labour Party had said that the Jewish National Home has no meaning unless the Jews from the Diaspora were permitted to enter Palestine until they became a majority. The same resolution proposed the transfer of the Arab population from Palestine. This latter was an extreme position beyond any ever taken by any Jewish group.

But Britain, he charged, wishes to steal the country for herself, and to give it neither to Jews nor Arabs, keeping it as a military base for herself.

At the time of the coming into power of Labour in Britain, Irgun did not share the illusions entertained in other quarters that the Labour Party would keep its promise, and said as much in a public statement at the time. It was, however, prepared to

wait, to interrupt operations and to give the new Government a chance to keep its promises and expose "British perfidy" to the Jews and the world at large. When Labour's intentions became clear, Haganá (meaning defence) decided to raise the banner of armed resistance in Palestine. Haganá was the largest of the three organised groups, the other two being the F.F.I. (Fighters for Freedom of Israel), known as the "Stern Group", and Irgun. In October 1945 these three groups reached an agreement to join hands in armed resistance. This agreement remained effective for ten months, and this was a period of large-scale operations. For example, there were operations against the railways, on November 1st, 1945, which effectively stopped them; there were other operations against air-fields, bridges and the like.

In the Irgun tradition if a British official is regarded as criminal in his activities a court trial is held, with the defendant *in absentis*, in view of the circumstances of an underground organisation. A verdict is reached, and the order is given to carry out the sentence.

In response to a question as to whether any action was ever taken against Jews, it was replied that Jewish informers on the British Secret Police have on occasion been condemned.

With regard to a question concerning the announcement by Irgun of the establishment of field courts to try British prisoners in consequence of the "British breach of the laws of warfare by killing Jewish captives", it was stated that such courts, though in existence, have not yet had any sentences carried out.

Reverting to the previous discussion on the relations among the three resistance groups, the Commander stated that all of the tasks of the three organisations which were combined during the period October 1945 to August 1946 were carried out under the name of the Jewish Resistance Movement.

After ten months of this operation, Haganá decided not to continue the struggle. Irgun, on the other hand, decided to continue in the same way, and in fact was convinced of the necessity of intensifying the struggle, since in Palestine an oppressive rule had been instituted without precedent in history and hundreds of thousands of Jews were languishing without hope in the Diaspora.

The Commander emphasised that Irgun is an underground organisation and must operate in the only way underground organisations can.

He stated that a document would be sent to the Committee by

Irgun which would set forth very clearly and in detail the objectives and demands of the organisation.

Asked what connection there is between Jewish Agency and Haganá, he said that question should be addressed to those bodies. "We are not spokesmen for either."

With regard to the organisation of Irgun, the Commander explained that it was organised and governed by common consent of its members. To quote him, "We are leaders of the organisation and we will remain as leaders so long as we carry out our mandate."

Continuing his historical discussion, the Commander observed that the entire history of the Jewish armed organisation began twenty-seven years ago with Haganá. In the early stages there were elections of officers by the nucleus of the organisation. Subsequently members of the organisation accepted the original leadership. Irgun sprang from Haganá, and followed the same method of leadership.

The Commander emphasised that no personal decisions are taken in Irgun. All decisions, he said, are taken collectively, and are therefore majority decisions. There is, he said, no dictatorship.

In summing up the aims of Irgun, the Commander stated that these could be expressed very simply as follows:

1. Irgun considers that Eretz Israel (Land of Israel) is the homeland of the Jewish people.
2. Eretz Israel means both East and West of the Jordan, including Transjordan. "Transjordan," he said, "is an English translation that is incomplete." In the original Hebrew both sides of the Jordan were, in effect, called "Transjordan"—"Ever-Hayarden Ma'arava" (the westward side of the Jordan) and "Ever-Hayarden Mizracha" (the eastward side of the Jordan). The forefathers of the Jews, he said, conquered Palestine from the present Transjordan side and crossed into Palestine from east to west. Irgun, he said, considers the whole territory as Jewish territory and aims at the creation of a Hebrew republic under a democratic government.
3. Immediate repatriation of all Jews wishing to be repatriated to Palestine. The exact number of Jewish potential repatriates is unknown, but would run into millions. The right of option should be given to all Jews who wish to return



to Palestine. Their return is prevented only by British illegal rule and by British armed force, which should be removed. A Jewish Government would undertake the repatriation of Jews with international help, perhaps under supervision.

4. We reject any statement made by the Labour Party as to the transfer of any Arabs from the country. There is enough room in Palestine for all, both Jews and Arabs.

5. Since Britain has decided to keep the country under her own control by force of arms, there is no other way to accomplish our aims than to meet force with force.

In response to a question concerning Arab immigration from other countries, the Commander replied that the question of admitting Arab immigrants into the Jewish State when it is created would be a matter for the Government of that State to decide, just as every State decides its immigration policy. The Irgun had no preconceived prejudice against anybody who might apply for a visa to the Hebrew State.

The first task of a Jewish Government would be to bring back to the country all Jews wishing to be repatriated. He emphasised that every Jew had a natural right to return to Palestine, and that the Jews had a *de jure* majority in the country. In fact, he said, the Jews now are only a *de facto* minority in Palestine, because the British would not let in all of those from outside who wished to come in. Once that obstacle were removed, it would be only a matter of months before they were the majority *de facto* as well. In reply to a question concerning the technical and fiscal difficulties of transferring large numbers of Jews to Palestine, the Commander referred to the statement made by a United States Army general that he could evacuate Jews from the European camps in a matter of weeks. He referred to the mass Turkish-Greek exchange of populations in 1922, effected in a matter of months. What was possible then was emphatically possible now, what with the gigantic strides in modern technical knowledge.

The Commander explained that politically the Irgun proposal is not to establish immediately a permanent Jewish Government in Palestine, but only a provisional Hebrew Government, to which power would be transferred for the specific task of accomplishing the repatriation of all Jews who wish to be repatriated. After this is accomplished the provisional Government will resign, and then free elections will be

held, participated in by both Jews and Arabs, and the permanent Government would thus be established. In this Government there could be Arab Ministers, perhaps an Arab Vice-President. The provisional Government would be democratic, because it would represent the rightful owners of the country, but would not be based on elections. The Commander pointed out that this had happened in numerous States, such as France and twice in Czechoslovakia.

The question was asked as to how long the provisional status would last. The Commander replied that it would last until all of the rightful citizens of Palestine are in the country. But, he cautioned, it is necessary to understand that in the creation of the Jewish State and the repatriation of Jews to it one cannot take normal circumstances and criteria as the measure. The Jews in Europe, he said, have gone through such ordeals that they are prepared to live in tents in Palestine if necessary. They will suffer when they come here, and it will take time, but it can be done quickly. He again referred to the one and a half million people who were exchanged between Greece and Turkey in 1922 in approximately nine months.

The question was asked whether if the British were out of the country and the Jewish State could be created the Irgun would dissolve. The Commander answered, "Yes." Asked what the Irgun would do in the case of partition, he pointed out that none of the Irgun members will accept any carving up of the territory which they consider to be the property of the Jewish State of Palestine, but it was early to speak of what the methods of resisting the carving up would be.

The Commander was asked what the Irgun position would be if the Jewish State and Jewish immigration should not develop as quickly as he might think or hope for, and the Arabs continued to have a numerical majority in the country and voted against immigration. He replied, "How could such elections take place in Palestine?" Any such elections, he stated, would be illegal, because they would exclude all those Jews outside who had a right to be in the country. Any Jew wishing to return to the country from which his forefathers were expelled has the right to do so.

The Commander observed that twenty-five years ago there were only 100,000 Jews in Palestine. The preamble to the Mandate under the League of Nations refers to the historical relations between the Jewish people and Palestine. The Jewish



claim was not based on the Mandate but on the natural right of the Jews to their country, which was as self-evident as the right of a Swede or a Frenchman to his country. The Mandate only recognised that natural right. The Jewish State as he envisaged it could take care of all Jews wishing to come to it. He could not say how many of the American Jews or Jews in Sweden might wish to come.

With regard to the absorptive capacity of the country, the Commander pointed out that in ancient times in Palestine there were between five and seven million people. Transjordan, he said, is absolutely empty, with only four people for each square kilometre. He emphasised strongly that Palestine belongs not only to the people now in the country, but to the Jews abroad as well.

Asked how the Jews would solve the overcrowding problem that would arise after, say, 300 years, even if they developed their State on both sides of the Jordan, his reply was, "What will they do in 300 years in other countries, like China?"

It was pointed out to the Commander that the settlement of Jews in Palestine created Arab resentment, and that this might lead to opposition by force, and he was asked what Irgun would do in such a contingency. He replied that Irgun does not believe in such a phenomenon as independent Arab opposition to Jewish repatriation. All Arab opposition, he said, is instigated by the British themselves. He quoted King Faisal's letter to Dr. Weizmann, in which King Faisal declared that Palestine should be a Jewish country. The British, he continued, instigated the Arabs to take a position of opposition to the Jewish State. Nevertheless, the Jewish population increased from 100,000 (*ca.*) to 700,000. Theoretically the Arabs oppose any increase in the Jewish population. He cited an article in the Egyptian Press of the day before quoting Jamal Husseini to the effect that partition, too, would mean war. But, questioned the Commander, are such threats serious, and are they to be taken seriously? If so, and we are to have "war" anyhow, even unjust expediency is not served by denying Jewish rights. On the other hand, if these are empty threats (and he believed that they are), then they are not to be taken seriously, also when uttered in relation to the satisfaction of Jewish claims in the whole of Eretz Israel.

Irgun, he said, will defend the Jewish people against anyone who will attack them, Arab or otherwise. But he did not believe

that the Arabs would actually go to war. This, he said, is all British propaganda. If the British left the country, he continued, there would be peace. Should the Jews, however, be attacked, they could protect themselves. He was entirely sure of this.

Irgun, he said, does not think the Iraqi, Lebanese or Syrians would attack the Jewish State. They are not serious armies, except if they have foreign assistance. If they do attack, he had no doubt the Jews would win the day.

The Commander suggested that the Committee might ask Mr. Gurney, the chief secretary of the Palestine Government, when the so-called Arab Higher Committee was elected by the Arab people.

The Commander was asked what proof he might produce for his allegation that Arab opposition had been instigated by the British. He replied that after the Balfour Declaration British generals made public speeches that there would be no Jewish State in Palestine, that there would be only limited immigration permitted, etc. Unofficially, he added, British officials, police officers, etc., go through Arab villages spreading rumours of threatened Jewish attacks, encouraging Arabs to oppose Jews, promising them arms, etc. He said the Haganá had in its archives detailed proofs of these allegations. He pointed out that despite Haj Amin El Husseini's instigation of the Arabs against the Jews in Jerusalem in 1920, he had been given a pardon and undemocratically given the post of Mufti.

The Commander was asked what his reaction would be to a proposal for partition. He replied that Irgun rejects partition, and will fight against it. First of all, as a matter of principle. A country, he said, is a thing no one is entitled to trade. We cannot give up any part of our country, which has been defended for generations by Jews who hope to come back to it. Thus, he said, we reject partition first of all on the basis of principle, but partition is moreover unpractical. Allegations have been made in United Nations meetings that Jews and Arabs cannot live together, that their aims and aspirations are irreconcilable, and therefore partition is necessary; but actually if these allegations are true, then partition is impossible, since no line of demarcation can actually provide for the peoples of this country living apart from each other. We have no confidence in Government statistics, he said, which are fabricated for political purposes. For example, the British Government said

that there were one million two hundred thousand Arabs in Palestine. But where are they to be found? A census was taken in 1931, and the bulk of the Arab population was illiterate. The Arab headmen in the villages receive a shilling for each birth they report.

The nucleus of large populations is always to be found in cities. Where, he asked, were the large Arab cities?

The only Arab cities worthy of the name are Jaffa, Nablus and parts of Haifa and Jerusalem. Irgun proposes a census of all of Palestine to be carried out under international control.

The Commander continued that if the larger plan of partition is taken (that is, along the lines of the Jewish Agency proposal) there would be an Arab majority, according to present Government statistics. In order to establish the Jewish majority there repatriation would be needed, precisely as for the Jewish majority in the whole country.

He stated that Irgun is opposed to the transfer of population, either Arab or Jewish, which some people had suggested as a means of carrying out partition. It is not moral to take people from their homes against their will. There is no need, in fact, for any transfer of population from Palestine or within Palestine, since there is room for all here. There is no possibility, he said, of exchanging populations. Under a partition scheme the majority of the Jews now in Palestine would live in a ghetto State behind an artificial boundary. No exchange of population in Palestine could be made without the use of force.

The Commander was asked whether a solution might be acceptable to Irgun which would provide for a federal State in Palestine, with the different parts having self-government somewhat along the lines of the States in the United States or the cantons in Switzerland, with an over-all central government.

He replied that the form of government in the future State of Palestine and the details of its constitution, etc., should be approved by the parliament of Palestine. It is first necessary to decide on the principle. What is Palestine from the point of history? Is it a Jewish state or not?

A federal State along the lines of the Morrison plan, he said, would mean the same thing as that on which the British are now trying to get the agreement of the United Nations in order to perpetuate her illegal occupation rule.

He stated that Irgun bases no claim on the League of Nations Mandate, but on the historical fact that Palestine has been

Jewish territory for tens of generations. Already 3000 years ago there was a Jewish State here, from which ultimately the forefathers of present-day Jews were expelled by force by the Romans. The people of Lidice, whose town had been obliterated by the Germans, came back after the war to rebuild their homes and their lives. It was their natural right. So it was with the Jewish return to Palestine.

The Arabs never created an Arab Government in Palestine. This was never an Arab country.

He said that the Irgun reply to any proposals is that if the Jewish people are allowed freely to return under their own rule, and the principle of the unity of the whole country is recognised, then all the rest is mere detail.

The Jewish State should be the first condition, as the repatriation of Jews is not possible except in a Jewish State.

Under a federal system the door might be closed to repatriation to some parts of the country, and this would be against one of Irgun's basic principles.

A question was asked as to what the meaning of Palestine as a homeland for the Jews might be for the Irgun.

The Commander replied that the meaning was an independent country ruled by its rightful owners, and that the Jews are the rightful owners.

He was asked what might happen to Arab land holdings in a Jewish State of Palestine. He replied that land now held by Arabs would be retained by them, but that in the new Palestine there would be need for agrarian reform. As in ancient times, latifundia exists in Palestine. There are vast lands held by Arab feudal landlords which are never worked, and large tracts held by the British. The Government of the new Palestine would have to adjust this situation. Every Arab and every Jewish farmer would have to be assured of enough land for a prosperous self-supporting farm.

The Commander was asked whether Irgun would fight against a solution which might be acceptable to the majority of the Jewish people but which did not meet all the aims and conditions set by the Irgun. He replied that no majority of this generation of the Jewish people has the right to give up the historic right of the Jewish people to their country, which belonged to all generations to come. He was convinced, he said, that the Jewish people as such would accept no solution contrary to Jewish tradition. If they should do so it was premature



to say what Irgun would do. Irgun, he added, is educating its young men now on the question of principle. One does not give up his principle, he pointed out, for opportunistic reasons.

The Commander was asked if he would state the reasons for the opposition to the British by the methods used by the Irgun—was it to force the evacuation of their troops, to release Jewish prisoners, or for what other purposes? He replied that what Irgun might be able to attain would be a matter of careful action on the basis of proportionate forces. The British, he said, have more than we have, but they also know that we are not easily crushed. What we wish is complete evacuation of the British, the removal of British rule, the setting up of a provisional government and the creation of the Jewish State. The British, he said, had previously told the world that they were here to protect the Jews against the Arabs, but General D'Arcy told the Anglo-American Committee that if the British left the country the Jews would control it in twenty-four hours—thus insinuating that the British had to remain in order to protect the Arabs from the Jews.

In response to a statement, the Commander asked the question "Is it true we have no support of the Jewish people? How could we resist if this is true, in the face of the great number of British police and troops here? We are convinced that we must fight or the Jewish people will be destroyed. We are not professional fighters, we don't take pleasure in shooting or being shot. Remember we have lost six million people, and every Jewish life is the more precious to us. But we fight for a purpose, to avoid subjugation and utter destruction."

The Commander pointed out that the fight of his organisation did bring troubles to the Jewish people—curfew, restrictions, retaliations, etc. But suffering, as every people that had fought knew, was inseparable from the struggle for independence. He added, "We are not just a handful of fanatics. We exist and gain strength even though we bring troubles to the Jewish people."

There was no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the Jewish people were in favour of the struggle. When the Jews had an opportunity of demonstrating their support—which was not always possible—they did so. For example, he pointed out that when the Haganá fought the Jewish people had utilised the opportunity to applaud the struggle.

The Commander, raising a legal point, contended that even

under the Mandate there is absolutely no right for a British Military Court in Palestine. The Mandate, he said, differentiated between force raised in Palestine, and British forces. The latter are regarded as foreign forces, and it follows that British military courts have no right here at all even on the basis of the Mandate. He emphasised that this point made no difference to the struggle, which would go on in any case, but should interest the Committee.

The Commander stated that the Irgun members consider themselves legal fighters, engaged in a legal fight, and that they considered the British to be here illegally. He stated that Irgun has lost many of its men in killed and wounded, and that it accepts this as an inevitable result of its operations. The British, he said, have executed four of their members, but Irgun did not cease its activities as a result of this, but rather it intensified them. "It inflicted heavy losses on the enemy and the price is not paid yet." After the executions, he observed, came Acre. Acre, he said, was no small feat. The fight will go on. The British suggestion that they might be prepared to forgo executing Irgun members if the Irgun stopped fighting is ridiculous blackmail. "Go to Acre, and ask the three boys sentenced to death whether they are prepared to buy their lives at the price of our struggle. They sent me letters, just as Dov Gruner sent, all saying: Whatever happens, fight on!" He added, "We are all prepared to give our lives." No member of Irgun, he said, ever asks for mercy. The Commander was questioned as to the Irgun attitude towards the General Assembly's appeal for a truce during the period of the United Nations inquiry. He replied that in connection with this appeal Irgun had sent to the Committee a reasoned document, and had stated publicly that it was prepared to cease operations during this period, but only on condition that the British would cease their repressive actions also during this period. To illustrate this condition, he referred to the use of British air and naval forces to intercept ships at sea carrying Jews wishing to come to Palestine, the promulgation of death sentences, searches and the imposition of curfews. These, he said, are acts of repression which the British must cease if Irgun is to observe the truce. Any one-sided cessation of operations, he said, is impossible.

The Commander expressed the hope that the Committee would go to Europe and would see the men in concentration camps who have been there—first in Germany and now in the



"Liberated camps"—for seven or eight years. He added that the camps in Europe were not the whole problem, only a part of it, but they reflected the problem in its most dire form.

The Commander expressed the fear that the General Assembly in September will not have time enough to deal with this problem, and that a second committee would be appointed to come to Palestine again, and that during all this time men, women and children would be languishing in concentration camps in Europe.

He stated flatly that if the British execute Irgun men, Irgun will execute British men—also by hanging. Irgun men, he said, are rightful fighters. Irgun, he said, is absolutely convinced that it fights not only for the independence of Palestine, but for the right of free men.

In response to a question, the Commander replied that the Anglo-American Committee had had no contact with Irgun. He stated that Irgun had sent a memorandum to the American members of the Committee, but had not sent it to the British members. He added that some individual American members of the Anglo-American Committee had tried to contact Irgun, but that it was not possible to do so at that time for security reasons.

The Commander explained that the Stern group had come out of the Irgun. They, too, are fighters, he observed. The Stern group came out as an independent group in 1940 as a result of the splitting of Irgun for various reasons. It was widely believed, he said, that the reason for the split was that Abraham Stern, then a member of the Irgun command, had opposed the Irgun proclamation of an armistice during the war against Hitler. This was not true. Stern had subscribed to that proclamation together with the rest of the Irgun Command. The split had come a year later. The relations now between the two groups are good. Irgun is larger, but he would not say that Irgun is better.

In response to a question as to what the effect might be on future Jewish youth of training them to disregard the law, the Commander replied that the Irgun members are trained to oppose what the British called law because it was the law of occupation and oppression, but that in his view the adjustment to a Jewish State would not be difficult for them. It might be a problem, but a minor problem only, in a Jewish State, because there would be an abundance of constructive work in which the youth would engage.

The Commander asked if there was any possibility of the Committee taking a positive attitude towards the request of the Irgun in the letter sent to the Committee that some of its members imprisoned at Acre be called as witnesses before the Committee. Mr. Sandstrom replied frankly, "There is very little possibility. We have done just about all we can do. We can ask why should these three men be the best men to give evidence of terror in the camps."

The Commander replied that the answer to the latter question would be that these men have been before the Military Court, and that they had themselves experienced maltreatment and witnessed that of others. He added that he did not think this beyond the terms of reference of the Committee, and in fact he felt the Committee was obliged to deal with it, since the Committee can investigate all the problems of Palestine. It is a fact, he said, that the existing Occupation Government in Palestine is treating prisoners in a barbarous way. Irgun could supply more witnesses than these three if the Committee would have the time to hear them. Irgun, he added, accuses the British of maltreating the prisoners.

Mr. Sandstrom observed that the point is that there must be other witnesses who can testify similarly, to which the Commander replied that the case of these three is special. They can tell of men who were shot and wounded after the capture in the Acre prison break, of wounded men who were shot dead while lying in agony on the ground; of others who died because they were given no medical treatment or even water. The three referred to in the Irgun letter, he said, had been taken prisoner in that operation.

The Commander stated that he was not sure that the intervention of the Committee would give any results. Any such intervention, in any case, would be couched in diplomatic terms, as was the resolution adopted by the Committee. He added that in his view there was a precedent for granting this request, which could be found in the Greek investigation by the UNO Security Council.

At the close of the meeting the Chairman mentioned the agreement which had been reached at its beginning that there would be no publicity concerning this meeting. The Commander replied, "Irgun always keeps its word. Ask the British. They will tell you." He agreed, however, that at some later date, when the Committee was gone from Palestine, the Chair-

man could, if he saw fit, release the story of this meeting and the text of the notes taken at the meeting, provided he would give a prior opportunity to review such notes before their release. This was agreed upon by the Chairman.

## II

### THE VOICE OF FIGHTING ZION BROADCASTING STATION OF THE IRGUN ZVAI LEUMI b'Eretz Israel.

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(Broadcast, August 13, 1947)

They will *not* succeed!

For half a century now the British enslavers have been carrying on their well-tried game in our country—exhibiting to the world—including gullible Jews—a Hebrew-Arab conflict which supposedly necessitates a “superior arbitrator” to settle the issue between the two sides and prevent an open conflict. The game came to an end in the past years, thanks to the Hebrew uprising, and to the teachings and acts of the Hebrew war for freedom. The world came to know that the real conflict in this country is the conflict between the Hebrew nation returning to its land and oppressing Britain, who decided to prevent our return home in order that she might rule here by virtue of the conflicts which she herself has created. The arms of Hebrew freedom, however, have removed the mask from the face of the enslavers. The *truth* about Eretz-Israel, the truth about British intentions of subjugation, the truth regarding the premeditated incitement of British agents—has been bared, for all to see!

But the British enslavers do not feel comfortable minus a mask. With characteristic stubbornness all the British propaganda channels bleat forth that there is no conflict between the Hebrews and English in Eretz-Israel and that there most certainly is no conflict between the Arabs and the British. There is only one conflict in existence here: The conflict between Jews and Arabs, and the poor Briton bears the brunt of both sides. Even the affair of the “Exodus Europe” belongs to the category of this chronic Hebrew-Arab conflict, and the British must hold them apart. They had no choice but to deport the repatriants to wherever they have deported them.

This is the contention of the inspired British press; this is the contention of British official representatives. But the world is not as gullible as the British would have us believe. Many of the "humanitarian veils" with which the British were wont to wrap themselves in the course of carrying out their own narrow interests have been torn asunder. Even so—this veil of "peaceful arbitration" which no man wants. The British are chewing their cud in their hypocritic declaration regarding their "mission of peace", and millions the world over look with disdain at their lies and put to scorn the stupidity of oppressors and subjugators who have not yet learnt to know that it is no longer possible to fool the world.

But the British never say die. For they cannot very well exist without "inter-communal strife", and if no such conflict exists—then one must be invented. For four years now they have been receiving blows at the hand of the Hebrew Underground Army. For four years now the world has known who is the real enemy of our country's independence, who is the enemy of Hebrew freedom. Now on the eve of the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, practically at the *last* moment, the Nazo-British enslavers have renewed the "good old days" of blood-clashes between Arabs and Hebrews in order that they might appear in the role of the "third party", interested only in preserving peace. And maybe thus—such is the hope of the inhabitants of the British ghettos in our country—we may yet see the Hebrew underground turn to another front and stop its attacks against us.

The attack on the café on the shores of the Yarkon must therefore be viewed from this angle. Many facts regarding the attack are still shrouded in mystery. Especially unclear is the fact of how a group of Britishers—who are not in the habit of visiting Jewish-owned coffee-houses for fear of "kidnappings"—happened to be there, and even less clear is the fact of how they were the *only ones* who managed to escape the attackers. It is also not clear why those same Britishers failed to use the many arms at their disposal to protect themselves. True, the "bravery" of British soldiers and police is most manifest in their murder of unarmed civilians, women and children, or in attacks of ten-against-one, but surely they would have been prepared to defend their *own lives* had they thought they were in danger!

All the above facts still require explanations. There is one

fact, however, which needs none: The bloody attack on the café was perpetrated by *British agents and with British arms*. There is but one answer to the question which every legal investigator must ask himself in such instances—"cui prodest" who benefits by such an act? Such bloodshed between Arabs and Jews is in the interest of the British, and *only* the interest of the British.

But this British plan will fail. *No development in the country or in the international field* will move us to ease up on the Number 1 enemy of our people and our desire for freedom and sovereignty. We have but one front: Our war to end the Nazo-British rule over our country.

Of course, it will be necessary to defend our cities and settlements: it will be necessary to repulse attacks—be the attackers whoever they be. But under *all circumstances* our war against the British oppressor will continue until he is out of our country—which was ours, and which will remain ours.

The British have punished the repatriants for the sabotage acts of the Haganá on their ships. Weeks and probably months will pass before the next group of the repatriants on Cyprus will be brought to the country, and their sufferings will continue.

The question is therefore asked: Did the leaders of the Haganá who ordered the sabotaging of British ships take into consideration the eventuality of British reprisals against the repatriants? One can presume that they did and that they nevertheless carried out their intentions. Yet, when our *overall war* brings forth—as is only natural—reprisals on behalf of the enslavers there arises a cry in the camp of deserters: Look at the troubles the "dissidents" bring on us with their senseless acts!

And this one-time sabotage on the deportation-ships is truly senseless! True, the act as such is good and we welcome *every* manifestation of resistance to the enslaver. But only when such an act of sabotage on a given objective is *part* of the general war, and not a *passing* fancy. The Haganá people know that the sabotaging of the British ferry-ships between Cyprus and Eretz Israel will not prevent the deportations; they also know that this is not *war* but merely an outlet for the seething need for action within their ranks. If that is so—then there really is no sense in imposing *additional* sufferings on the repatriants because of such demonstrative acts. To do something for *internal consumption*, without taking into consideration the effect it might have on others—that is truly first-rate lack of responsibility!